

US offers \$30M to cement RP-MILF peace settlement

Story on
PAGE A2

'Chorizo' maker brings home P54-M bacon



By Jhunnex Napallacan
PDI Visayas Bureau
CEBU CITY—Age really mattered to this lotto bettor. In fact, it was worth millions of pesos.
By picking his age
'CHORIZO' A7

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph

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P15

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

From 77, RP slips to 85 in UN quality of life list

GENEVA—International programs to help poor nations develop and industrialize are failing in many countries and need a "guerrilla assault" if the world is to meet its targets for reducing poverty, a major United Nations report said Tuesday.
Instead of forcing developing countries to cut back on public spending, the

FROM 77/A7

Iranian twins die in surgery

SINGAPORE—Neurosurgeons separated 29-year-old Iranian twins, who were born joined at the head, after two days of pioneering surgery, but both sisters died Tuesday shortly after their parting.

Ladan Bijani died 90 minutes ahead of her sister Laleh. Both deaths were caused by massive blood loss after a historic 50-hour operation, hospital officials said.

"When we undertook this challenge, we knew the risks were great. But we were hopeful. Ladan and Laleh knew the risks too," said Dr. Loo Choon Yong, chair of Raffles Hospital. "As doctors there is only so much we can do as the rest we have to leave it to

the Almighty."

The risky, marathon separation procedure began Sunday. Before the operation, doctors had warned that the surgery could kill one or both of the twins, or leave them brain-dead.

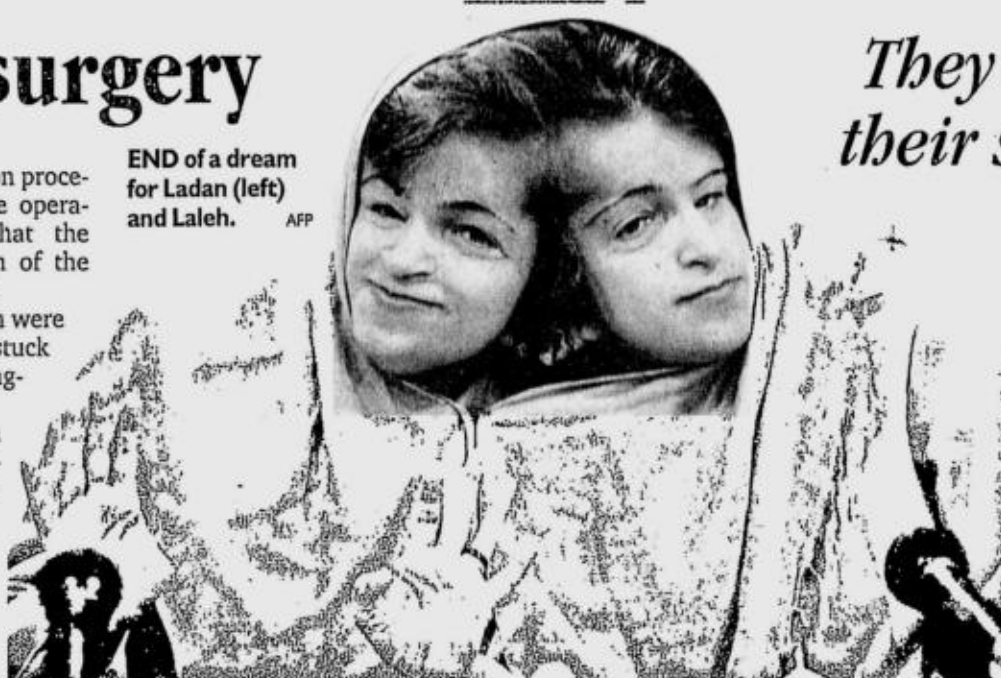
The brains of Ladan and Laleh were separate, but were nonetheless stuck together after years lying alongside each other.

"At least we helped them achieve their dream of separation. Naturally I am very sad, as all of us are," lead neurosurgeon Dr. Keith Goh said.

"Over the last six months, everyone who came in contact

IRANIAN/A18

END of a dream
for Ladan (left)
and Laleh. AFP



They wanted to go their separate ways

SINGAPORE—Since they were children, Ladan Bijani and her sister, Laleh, spent their lives trying to go different ways even though they were born joined at the head.

A friend remembered seeing the pair try to walk in opposite directions to break free of each other when they were 8 years old.

"But that was not possible. Then, they cried because of the pain it caused," the friend told The Associated Press in Tehran on condition of anonymity.

To the age of 29, the sisters never

THEY/A18

LRT bomber pleads guilty

Prosecution says plea bolsters case vs all accused

By Margaux Ortiz
Metro

WEEKS after he confessed and begged for forgiveness, a suspected Moro rebel yesterday pleaded guilty to charges that he helped plan at least one of five coordinated bombings that left 22 people dead and hundreds wounded in Metro Manila three years ago.

"Oo, oo (Yes, yes)," Muklis Yunos, also known as Saifullah Yunos, told Judge Lucia Purugganan of the Manila Regional Trial Court Branch 54 when she asked him if he was aware that he could face the death penalty.

Yunos, 31, admitted that he was among the plotters of the Dec. 30, 2000 bombing of the Light Rail Transit carriage that killed 12 people and wounded 19 others in Blumentritt, Manila.

But Yunos, who was wearing handcuffs and a detainee's saffron shirt, insisted he was already in Marawi City when the Rizal Day bombing of the LRT station took place. Four other bombings in Metro Manila on the same day left 12 others dead and at least 81 wounded.

He also said he did not know most of his 10 co-accused, who included two alleged leaders of Jemaah Islamiah, a regional terrorist group that has been linked to Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida network.

Yunos appeared composed during his 30-minute arraignment, nodding his head each time Judge Purugganan asked him questions relating to the charges of multiple murder, multiple frustrated

LRT/A17



BOMBING suspect Muklis Hadji Yunos is led away by a heavily armed policeman after his arraignment in a Manila regional court where he pleaded guilty.

ERIK ARAZAS

SMC head says loans not behest

By Elena R. Torrijos
and Gil Cabacungan Jr.

SAN MIGUEL Corp. president Ramon Ang yesterday strongly denied that loans extended by the United Coconut Planters Bank to three companies affiliated with him were "behest."

Ang faxed UCPB documents to the INQUIRER certifying that the bank had lent a total of P2.71 billion—not P4.1 billion—to Asturias Chemical Industries Inc., Lucky Star Holdings Inc. and Skysets Inc., all owned by Ang together with some partners.

"It is not behest. For it to be behest it has to be a government bank and the intention from the start was not to repay the loans but to run away with the money," Ang said. "In our case we have religiously been paying interest and principal. The loans are over-collateralized."

Ang also pointed out that he was not a director, stockholder or officer of the government-sequestered bank and that he had no related interest.

SMC HEAD/A18

Bicol govts deny report they're backing Danding

By Juan Escandor Jr.
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau
and Juliet Javellana in Manila

NAGA CITY—Camarines Sur Gov. Luis Villafuerte yesterday denied giving his formal support to businessman Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco, who is considering a run for the presidency. Villafuerte also denied the governors of the Bicol region had issued a statement supporting Cojuangco.

He claimed that, for yesterday's INQUIRER front-page story that was largely attributed to him, he was not even interviewed. But Villafuerte acknowledged that he received two calls from reporter Jerry Esplanada last month, before Cojuangco celebrated his birthday in the United States. He said the INQUIRER wanted to verify information from former Press Secretary Rod Reyes that the Bicol governors had united in support of Cojuangco's presidential bid. (The INQUIRER

did talk to Villafuerte. See Esplanada's explanation on Page A18.)

In Malacañang, a ranking official also denied the report. Secretary Jose Ma. Rufino, presidential liaison for political affairs, said that, on the contrary, the six Bicol governors had pledged their unwavering support for President Macapagal-Arroyo.

"They pledged their support and fealty to GMA," Rufino told the INQUIRER. He said Villafuerte even called up the Presi-

dent to deny the report.

"Governor Villafuerte talked to the President and denied it," Rufino said.

Villafuerte said the Bicol governors consulted one another yesterday. He said Raul Lee of Sorsogon (of LDP), Jesus Typoco of Camarines Norte (Lakas-CMD) and Leandro Vercelles of Catanduanes (Lakas) were one in "denying that they have already formally committed to Cojuangco."

BICOL/A18

Father priest confesses; parishioners weep

By Lino Gilbert K. Parone
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—Saying he was "not worthy," a former parish priest of San Isidro in Barangay Talamban has admitted fathering two sons with a woman he has loved since college.

The scene was unforgettable, according to Talamban Parish Pastoral Council president Victor Maliluya, who recalled that many of the parishioners wept at Fr. Oscar Ornop's confession.

It was only after his parishioners of four years expressed willingness to forgive him that

Ornop started the Sunday Mass on June 1, Maliluya said.

It was supposedly the first time Ornop was seen in public since the scandal over his illicit relationship, triggered by a TV report, broke out in May.

By Maliluya's account, the hilltop church was filled with worshippers that Sunday. To their surprise, Ornop, garbed in a cassock, entered and approached the altar where his chasuble and stole, priestly garments used in celebrating Mass, were laid out.

Ornop stood before the as-

FATHER/A20



FR. ORNOP, parish priest of Talamban, Cebu City.

AZELA JANE BRASGAPDI VISAYAS BUREAU

Lakas bets for 2004 out by July 21, says Ramos

Lacson says he's not obsessed with running

By Gil Cabacungan Jr.
and Christine O. Avendaño

THE RULING Lakas-CMD will finalize by July 21 its list of probable standard-bearers for 2004, its chair emeritus Fidel V. Ramos announced yesterday.

Ramos said at a press conference that he was hopeful the Nationalist People's Coalition of businessman Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco, Lakas' partner in the ruling coalition, would adopt the same candidates.

The former President said Lakas' choice of candidates would be based on their "winnability" as indicated in the surveys.

But Sen. Manuel Villar said the Lakas-Peo-

ple Power Coalition would be at risk of splitting up if there were more than one presidential candidate coming from it. He said there might be three or four such candidates in this bloc.

On another front, Sen. Panfilo Lacson said he would pursue the presidency only if the united opposition chose him as its standard-bearer.

If not, he said, he would go back to the Senate, finish his six-year-term in 2007, and do away with politics forever.

"I'm not obsessed with running for the presidency," Lacson said at the Bulong Pulungan forum at the Westin Philippine Plaza.

LAKAS/A18



WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Southern Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao will experience cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms while the rest of the country will be mostly cloudy with isolated rainshowers and thunderstorms.

COMPILED BY: RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/07/09/03

SOURCE PAGASA

E-mail: pr_news@inquirer.com.ph

Second FRONT PAGE

WEDNESDAY, JULY 9, 2003

Manila	Mostly Cloudy	Hola/Rosario	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laag	Partly Cloudy	Taelehan	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Cloudy with Rains	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legaspi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

US offers \$30M for peace with MILF

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

THE UNITED States, which said it will play the role of a "witness" in the peace talks with the separatist Moro Islamic Liberation Front, has offered to provide financial aid to cement the political settlement, but only if a final peace agreement is signed.

US Ambassador Francis Ricciardone gave the broad outlines of the US role in the talks after he and visiting US Agency for International Development official Wendy Chamberlin met with President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday.

USAID is providing about \$74 million to the Philippines in the current US fiscal year, more than half of it going to Mindanao.

Ricciardone said there would be another \$30 million to support the peace process.

Also yesterday, the President said the government would agree to lift arrest warrants against the MILF's top leaders to jump-start the peace talks.

"We are open to the suspension of warrants by the court if this is necessary to move the peace talks forward," said Ms Macapagal, adding that the government was working "to build confidence in the peace process" and preparing for the opening of talks.

But she said the MILF should

"not tarry on procedures," noting how the rebels had several lawyers and advisers among its ranks.

MILF spokesperson Eid Kabalu welcomed the President's statement saying rebel negotiators were now prepared to resume talks in Malaysia.

Chamberlin, the assistant administrator of USAID in Asia and the Near East, said the agency would be happy to provide assistance to the MILF rebels similar to what it gave the Moro National Liberation Front which signed a peace agreement with the government in 1996.

USAID has helped some 13,000 former MNLF rebels turn to corn, rice and seaweed farming, she said.

But she laid down the condition: "Aid might be available only if

there's peace, if there's an end to violence in the area. These are important matters that we certainly hope all parties will take very seriously."

Chamberlin said she plans to tour Mindanao to discuss aid to the region in the context of the ongoing peace process.

"We hope to begin to look at what we can do together in education, good governance and economic spheres," she told a press conference.

"Through all these programs, and in a much broader sense, we're working together to combat terrorism," she said.

Ricciardone described the US role as encompassing two areas.

First, in underwriting the peace as described by Chamberlin for which the US Congress has

earmarked \$30 million, he said.

"So there's that much in addition to \$74 million in current funding down there, almost a 50 percent increase to support a genuine peace if it gets under way, if the parties make the hard decisions," Ricciardone said.

He recalled that after then President Ramos had worked out the 1996 peace agreement with the MNLF, US aid followed.

"I think we offered development assistance as an inducement to the parties at the time," he said.

A second role for the US would be in the area of diplomatic support for the talks by backing Malaysia's role as third-party mediator.

"Malaysia has kept the flames of the peace process warm even when there has been no process. It's the

Malaysians who have called the parties to get together again and the United States has no intention of supplanting that. On the contrary, we're interested in supporting the Malaysian leadership role in convening the parties," Ricciardone said.

Ricciardone said the US government was deliberately "staying back a bit" and was letting the US Institute for Peace (USIP), which he described as almost a non-governmental organization, act as its agent in the peace process.

He said the USIP, a Washington DC-based federal institution, was gathering "very distinguished, eminent, credible Americans" with experience in diplomacy and statesmanship to lend their expertise and to "speak with the parties in conflict." With an AFP report

Anti-narcotics officials warn vs rash naming of drug lords

By Christian V. Esguerra

NOT SO fast.

Two ranking officials of the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) yesterday warned President Macapagal-Arroyo against releasing the names of big-time drug traffickers "too soon."

"It's simply impractical. Anti-drug operations don't work that way," said one of the officials, both of whom spoke on condition of anonymity.

The other official, who has a direct hand in anti-drug operations, advised Malacañang to name names only after the suspects had been arrested and charged in court.

The official cited the case of Chinese Hong Shan Shan, 23, who was allegedly caught with some P2-million worth of shabu in a raid in Quiapo, Manila last June 19.

PDEA operatives, he said, had withheld information about the arrest since they were still looking for the other members of Hong's gang in Manila.

The follow-up operation was bungled, the

official told the INQUIRER, when the gang members heard a radio report on the raid and managed to flee.

More bungled operations like this would follow if Malacañang and Interior Secretary Jose Lina insisted on naming drug suspects prematurely, he said.

Lina, who also heads the Dangerous Drugs Board, had said the names of drug lords would be publicized after the PDEA and DDB had gathered enough evidence against them.

An administration congressman, meanwhile, proposed yesterday the placing of a P1-million bounty on the head of each drug lord to encourage the public to provide information to them.

Rep. Jose Apolinario Lozada (Lakas, Negros Occidental) said in a statement, "They should be A-1 drug lords. We do not want fall guys."

But Lozada did not say where the reward money would come from.

Sen. Panfilo Lacson, however, had another suggestion.

He said the administration should execute the 38 drug pushers now on death row to show it was serious in its drive against illegal drugs. With Carlito Pablo and Christine O. Avena-daño

GMA: Gov't to unmask Red fronts

By Juliet Labog-Javellana and Jerome Aning

IN WHAT could become another obstacle to ongoing efforts to revive the peace talks with communist rebels, President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday said the government would release the names of legitimate entities believed to be acting as "fronts" for the Communist Party of the Philippines and its allied organizations to cut off their sources of funding.

This new task expectedly drew angry protests from militant groups, some of which have party-list representatives sitting in Congress.

"We will mount a full-court press on the security and developmental components of this threat even as we leave the door open to peace talks based on constitutional, democratic participation," the President said in a speech at the Bishops-Businessmen's Conference for human development yesterday.

The President at the weekend accused the rebels of carrying out "treacherous attacks" despite efforts to revive the peace talks and of turning to drug trafficking to finance their rebellion.

Ms Macapagal said the government would be moving on two tracks against the communist rebels.

First, it will conduct a "political, social and economic audit" of the 500 or so New People's Army-influenced barangays to wrest control of them

from the NPA, the communists' armed wing.

Second, it will "identify and expose the growing number of front organizations of the CPP-NPA-NDF and cut their links from domestic and foreign components of this threat, even as we leave the door open to peace talks based on constitutional, democratic participation," she said.

The National Democratic Front, the political arm of the communist party, acts as the rebels' negotiators and consultant in the peace talks.

The President earlier said the Joint Agreement on Security and Safety and Immunity Guarantees was being used as a cover by NDF consultants to undermine the constitutional government.

'Masquerading'

"We shall isolate them from the international community by exposing them for what they are—terrorists masquerading as revolutionaries," she said last Saturday.

Government negotiators, after informal talks in the Netherlands with NDF leaders last week, are preparing to resume formal peace talks by the end of the month.

Teodoro Casiño, secretary general of the militant Bagong Alyansang Makabayan said, suppressing militant groups on mere suspicion that they have links with the CPP-NPA-NDF was "Marcosian."

During martial law, all groups critical of the government were suppressed and their members hunted and jailed.

"As long as we don't take

up arms and engage in an armed struggle against the government, there is no legal basis for the government to disrupt our activities and forbid us from raising funds for our causes," Casiño said in a phone interview.

Anak ng Bayan-Youth Party national president Apolinario Alvarez said the President's move was a threat to the freedom of assembly and expression.

Pamalakaya spokesperson Gerry Albert Corpuz described the move as a classic government tactic to "demonize the Left."

In a related development, Maj. Gen. Romeo Dominguez, chief of the Army's Northern Luzon Command said the military attacks on the NPA in Central Luzon last week were "purely coincidental" and "not aimed at putting pressure on the NDR."

He described the offensives as being regular internal security operations of the military and the national police.

In a statement, Gregorio "Ka Roger" Rosal, the CPP spokesperson, said the military offensive was jeopardizing the peace talks in the Netherlands even as he denied military claims that 15 rebels were killed in the Sasmuan, Pampanga, firefight on Saturday.

Dominguez said there was "no basis" for the Army to reduce the NPA's death toll in Sasmuan.

"We don't give numbers from out of the blue," he said, adding this was based either on body count, accounts of intelligence operatives, civilian supporters and confirmation with the military's order of battle. With a report from Tonette Orejas, Ronaldo Dizon and Russell Arador, PDI Central Luzon Desk

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Davide: High court won't yield to attacks

By Philip C. Tubeza

"THIS INSTITUTION will never yield to any sinister moves."

Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. struck back anew yesterday at critics of the Supreme Court.

"As I said before, this is an institution that we are willing to die for," Davide said, as he received a resolution of the Integrated Bar of the Philippines condemning "unwarranted and malicious attacks" against the high court.

It was the first resolution issued by the IBP's new officials, led by president Jose Anselmo Cadiz, who took their oath at the SC yesterday.

"The IBP expresses its unqualified, unflinching and unequivocal support for the Supreme Court in the face of unfounded and unfair accusations and charges against its members," the resolution said.

Davide and seven SC magistrates face an impeachment complaint in Congress filed by lawyers of deposed President Joseph Estrada, who claimed that a conspiracy between the justices and the camp of then Vice President Macapagal-Arroyo had led to Estrada's ouster in January 2001.

Yesterday, Bayan Muna party-list Rep. Crispin Beltran asked Ms Macapagal to support an investigation of Davide following a Commission on Audit report that the SC had yet to account for P300 million of the Judiciary Development Fund (JDF) that totaled almost P800 million by the end of 2001.

Beltran said he was throwing his support behind thousands of court employees who were demanding a full-blown probe of the missing funds. He said the high court, Davide and several justices should be made to explain.

The JDF, which is under the direct management and control of the justices, was established under Presidential Decree No. 1949 by ousted dictator Ferdinand Marcos.

Consisting of various court fees collected nationwide, the JDF is earmarked for the benefit of the members and personnel of the judiciary, to help ensure its independence.

Beltran said the COA report showed that the

Libya reopens doors to OFWs

THE LIBYAN Embassy announced yesterday the lifting of the country's ban on incoming overseas Filipino workers due to the recent Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome scare.

In a note verbale to the Department of Foreign Affairs, Libyan Ambassador Salem Adam said the ban was lifted last Friday, July 4.

He said Libya took the step after confirming with the World Health Organization that the Philippines was no longer on the WHO list of countries with SARS.

Adam said the embassy in Manila began issuing visas to OFWs last week.

Philip C. Tubeza

JDF had reached P790,580,670 by December 2001, but that SC ledgers documenting the collection accounted for only P488,196,628. With Cynthia D. Balana

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'Tabang' gets P1.6M for 'lumad' kids

By Volt Contreras

THE TABANG Mindanao humanitarian group has announced it has obtained new private funding for its literacy program in the war-ravaged communities of the South, which it will use to help *lumad* (indigenous) children overcome discrimination in school.

The Metrobank Foundation gave Tabang a P1.6-million grant yesterday to be used exclusively for the "culturally sensitive" tutoring of pre-schoolers from Mindanao's hill-tribe minorities.

Additional barrier

During the signing of the agreement yesterday, Tabang co-chair Howard Dee said that while getting an education was difficult enough in Mindanao's poorest areas, *lumad* children had an additional social barrier to hurdle when enrolling in public schools.

Lumad children tend to be "ostracized and even ridiculed" by other pupils in the public schools which are dominated by lowlanders, Dee said.

This was usually so because the *lumad* child, lacking a pre-school education, enters

school "unprepared and without confidence," he said.

Apart from the poverty and the grueling daily walk to school, this early experience with "discrimination" was just another reason for many *lumad* children to drop out, said Maya Soriano, coordinator of Tabang's Indigenous People Literacy Program.

Soriano said a component of the program catering to *lumad* children has been in place since Tabang was established in 1998, and which has been implemented in Bukidnon and in the North and South Cotabato provinces where Tabang runs community-based projects.

The Metrobank grant will be used in five more communities in Pagadian, Cotabato, Osamis, Butuan and Digos.

Pride in culture

Soriano said that under the program, *lumad* children are not just introduced to the 3Rs, but are also taught to be "proud of their culture" by making them appreciate the songs, poems and stories of their ancestors.

"They are told that their culture is unique," she said. "We try to build their confidence and

make them articulate so they can do well in class. For if they excel in class, the teasing they get from classmates would eventually die down."

Fast learners

Soriano said that *lumad* pupils have been observed to be faster at learning than non-*lumad* because "they have fewer distractions in their upland homes when they study their lessons."

The pre-schoolers covered by the program include the Manobos in Cotabato; Tibolis in Marbel, South Cotabato; B'laans in Sarangani; Higaonons in Bukidnon; Tagakaolos in Digos, Davao del Sur, and the Tiboli-Ubos in Sultan Kudarat.

Soriano said the Metrobank grant will cover three years of the program, with an estimated 200 *lumad* pre-schoolers expected to benefit each year.

The signing of the agreement between Tabang and the Metrobank was a side activity of the Bishops-Businessmen's Conference's 27th general assembly meeting yesterday which also served as a multi-sectoral forum on Mindanao development.

COA 'targets' to take up arms vs grafters

By Armand N. Nocum

GOVERNMENT auditing in a country mired in corruption has become a dangerous, if not altogether deadly, undertaking.

And so, setting aside their calculators and ledgers, state auditors out to pin down grafters have decided to take up arms and match fire with fire.

"It is no secret that they make target practice out of some of our personnel in the so-called badlands of Sulu and other wild and violent provinces in the country," said a middle-level official of the Commission on Audit, who asked not to be named.

Mindful of such a hazard, COA chair Guillermo N. Carague has approved field auditors' requests to arm themselves, and ordered that a firing range be built at the agency's main office in Quezon City.

In a memorandum dated June 25, 2003, security officer Rodolfo Uysaid it was a "necessity" for the

COA's auditors, lawyers and technical property inspectors to be trained in "self-defense."

Uysaid this was the commission's response to the questions of media and some members of civil society groups after state auditors Agustin Chan and Anita Gallito were gunned down in separate incidents less than two years ago.

Chan and his driver were ambushed by unidentified armed men in Bantay town, Ilocos Sur on Oct. 4, 2001. It was the day after the provincial auditor supposedly asked former Gov. Chavit Singson to "liquidate," or account for, the provincial government's expenses during the latter's term.

Anita Gallito, state auditor IV of the Department of Education in Surigao del Sur, was reportedly investigating a multimillion-peso graft case involving a ranking official when she was murdered on Oct. 29 of the same year.

Carague earlier described both killings as "work-related."

Estrada auditor may have altered face, Wycoco says

By Margaux Ortiz

YOLANDA Ricaforte, deposed President Joseph Estrada's alleged personal auditor, may be enjoying a new life in the United States—with a new face.

This was revealed yesterday by National Bureau of Investigation Director Reynaldo Wycoco, who returned Monday from an official trip to the US.

Wycoco said he had met with San Francisco, California police and Federal Bureau of Investigation agents who informed him that Ricaforte, suspected auditor of Estrada's jueteng collections, may have undergone cosmetic

surgery to alter her appearance.

"This explains how Ricaforte has eluded arrest for sometime now," Wycoco said, adding that the bureau and its US counterpart were currently using computer software to help determine what Ricaforte might look like now.

The NBI chief said his US trip also concerned the search for fugitives Glen Dumlaog, Cesar Mancao and Michael Ray Aquino, all former officials of the Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force (Paotf) and implicated in the kidnapping and murder of publicist Salvador "Bubby" Dacer and his driver Emmanuel Corbito.

Dumlaog, Mancao and Aquino

are also accused in the Kuratong Baleleng multiple murder case.

Wycoco said the Filipino community in San Francisco earlier informed the bureau that the suspects were "moving in their midst." He said the San Francisco police and the FBI were helping track them down.

"I believe the person behind the smear campaign while I was away was the same person supporting the three black angels of death—Dumlaog, Mancao and Aquino," Wycoco added.

He declined to comment when asked if he was referring to Sen. Panfilo Lacson.

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**HONESTO VITUG, '30'**

Veteran photojournalist Honesto Vitug, the "dean" of Philippine press photography, passed away yesterday at the age of 94. In a career that spanned almost his entire life, Vitug covered all kinds of events and worked for many publications, most notably the late Manila Chronicle. Vitug's legacy, however, are the book and the photo exhibit at the National Press Club titled "I Shoot the Presidents," his picture record of all the presidents since Manuel L. Quezon.

ERIK ARAZAS

'It's a boy' for Subic Bay sea lion

SUBIC BAY FREEPORT—It's a boy.

Sheena, one of the sea lions at the Ocean Adventure theme park, made history Saturday when she gave birth to the country's first naturally born sea lion.

The pup's father, Charlie, a 10-year-old South American sea lion, was beside his mate during delivery, according to Nina Castro of Ocean Adventure.

It was the first time that a seal was born in captivity at the Sea Lion Training Center here.

But it was Sheena's second pregnancy. She is also mother to Coby, who turned three years old on Monday.

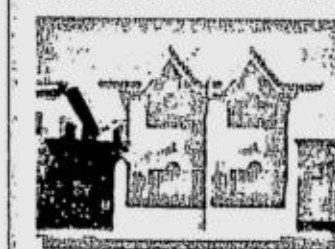
The new pup, who has not been named, is doing well, according to Tim Desmond, the park's chief executive officer.

"Our veterinary staff and animal care people are watching Sheena and her baby for the next 48 hours," Desmond said. "If Sheena can't nurse the pup well, we'll have to feed him manually."

With the new pup, Ocean Adventure now has nine sea lions, for which it maintains two holding kennels and two netted and natural lagoons. Allan Macatuno, PDI C. Luzon Desk

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Poll counting machines finally arriving—GMA

THE FIRST of the automated counting machines for use in next May's national elections will be arriving on Aug. 5, President Macapagal-Arroyo announced yesterday at a meeting of the Bishops-Businessmen's Conference.

The President said electoral reform through the computerization of voting and counting of ballots was one way to improve moral standards in government and society.

"This will be one of our great legacies to suffrage," the President said.

"For improved moral standards, there are many things we must do. One of them is to help honest people get elected through electoral reform," she said.

Ms. Macapagal said the Commission on Elections was able to bid out the automated machines just in time for the machines to be ready in May.

She said the Department of Science and Technology and the Comelec will be putting the machines through "a grueling set of tests to make sure that they are sturdy and worthy."

The President said it was the BBC, which held its 27th general assembly yesterday, that began the campaign for computerized elections many years ago.

She said the BBC was the proper agency rather than the administration to handle the advocacy for computerized elections. *Juliet Labog-Javellana*

DOJ rebuffs Enrile anew on libel suit against Inquirer

THE DEPARTMENT of Justice has dismissed a motion filed by former Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile asking the DOJ to reconsider its earlier decision junking Enrile's libel suit against the INQUIRER.

Justice Undersecretary Ma. Merceditas Gutierrez said she found "no cogent reason" to reverse the earlier decision as the grounds raised in the new motion had already been addressed.

"After a careful examination of the motion and the records of this case, we find no cogent reason to modify, alter, much less reverse our findings," Gutierrez said.

The Department of Justice on Feb. 7 reversed a Makati prosecutor's ruling that found "probable cause" for libel against the paper.

Enrile claimed that a Dec. 4, 2001 INQUIRER article on the disputed coconut levy funds had "induced readers to suppose" that he had accumulated ill-gotten wealth and plundered the funds.

The article was based on a statement by the Presidential Commission on Good Government.

Enrile filed charges against reporters Donna Cueto and Dona Pazzibugan, as well as publisher Isagani Yambot, editor-in-chief Letty Jimenez-Magsanoc, news editor Artemio Engracia and associate editor Abel Ulanday.

In her Feb. 7 resolution overturning the prosecutor, Gutierrez said there was no malice in the article.

"The element of malice, either in law or in fact, is wanting in this case," she said. *Philip C. Tubeza*

Pottery talk set

BANKER and collector Edwin Bautista will give a lecture on the exciting pottery being unearthed at Islas de Gigantes, a small island off the coast of Panay island, at the National Museum at 10 a.m. on Saturday.

Among the finds at Islas de Gigantes are Thai Dvaravati period pottery dating from the 7th to 10th centuries, and Philippine earthenware manufactured in Batangas and other places like Sicogon and Dumarang.

The lecture, part of the Lecture 2003 series jointly sponsored by the National Museum and the Museum Foundation of the Philippines, will be held at the Tambunting-Villancon Hall of the Museum of the Filipino People (former Finance Bldg.), Rizal Park.

Registration begins at 9:30 a.m. Admission fees include snacks and hand-outs. Call Jing Pascual at 404-2685 or Cynthia Valdes at 842-0329 for further information.

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THE TRUTH ABOUT THE LCT M/V GOLDEN SWAN CERTIFICATE OF INSPECTION ISSUE

Yesterday, the Philippine Petroleum Sea Transport Association (Philpesta) came out with a full-page paid advertisement with this newspaper showing its support to the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) for the latter's non-issuance of a Certificate of Inspection (CI) to LCT M/V "GOLDEN SWAN".

The issuance of the Certificate of Inspection (CI) issue of Golden Swan is pending resolution by the Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA) Board of Directors for the reason that the PCG refused to perform its deputized function. It is unfortunate that the Philpesta is now using the media to make disinformation campaign thereby putting undue pressure on the government agencies (MARINA and PCG) in resolving the issue.

Disinformation # 1 – *Philpesta makes it appear that PCG is the safety regulatory agency and it is just concerned with maritime safety.*

Fact # 1 - MARINA is the safety regulatory agency under Executive Order No. 125/125-A, and the latter has allowed the GOLDEN SWAN to carry and transport ammonia in bulk. PCG, being its deputized agent, must follow MARINA's approval/decision and not question the safety standards and rules applied and used by it. After all, under the deputization order (MARINA Memorandum Circular No. 39), all CIs issued by the PCG are deemed issued by MARINA.

On the other hand, the MARINA had already exhaustively dealt with the issue of the safety of GOLDEN SWAN. On July 16, 2001, MARINA approved the conversion of GOLDEN SWAN from a Landing Craft Transport (LCT) to Liquefied Gas Carrier (LGC) and allowed to carry and transport ammonia in bulk. This was followed by a Decision dated January 16, 2002 allowing the vessel to remain as LCT but can carry ammonia in bulk.

Disinformation # 2 - *Philpesta states that GOLDEN SWAN is an "existing ship", thus covered by SOLAS and*

International Gas Carrier (IGC) Code.

Fact # 2 – GOLDEN SWAN is a "new ship", not an "existing ship"; and the applicable rules/standard thereto are the local rules, not the international rules/standards. Thus, under PMMRR 1997, Regulation 1/4 (60), a "new ship" is defined as a "newly constructed vessel" or an "existing ship which undergoes major conversion". And as a "new ship", it is covered under Regulation I/3 (3), to wit:

"New ships as defined hereunder to be registered in Philippine Registry of Ships in which, by their size and type of operation, are covered by the provisions of these Rules and Regulations, shall comply with the latter in all respects, and in the absence thereof, shall comply with the provisions of relevant international maritime conventions mentioned in paragraph 1 of this Regulation in a suppletory character:"

It is very ironic that PCG is now insisting that the rules and standards provided by the IGC Code must apply with GOLDEN SWAN. It is on record that on July 1, 2002, PCG officially declared that the IGC Code and other international maritime rules do not apply to vessels engaged in domestic trade, like the GOLDEN SWAN.

Disinformation # 3 - *Philpesta makes it appear the GOLDEN SWAN failed to comply with all the safety requirements, thus, PCG refuses to issue the CI.*

Fact # 3- PCG, in writing, said the GOLDEN SWAN already complied with all the requirements for the renewal of its CI. In fact, PCG expressed no opposition to the issuance of the CI provided that MARINA should be the one to issue it. The MARINA Board, on the other hand, ordered/directed the PCG to issue the CI, being its deputized agent under MC No. 139. This is the only issue to be resolved by the MARINA Board – Can PCG legally refuse to issue the CI when it is deputized by MARINA to issue in its behalf and under its name?

There appears to be a concerted campaign by business competition, with the support of Philpesta, to prevent GOLDEN SWAN from operating notwithstanding its compliance with all the legal, technical and safety requirements. Golden Swan is a victim of the ping-pong game between PCG and MARINA on its application for Certificate of Inspection. As Philpesta would agree, Pheschem Industrial Corporation, as the ship owner, more than anybody else, is most concerned with the safety of its ship, its crew, and its cargoes.

Its about time that the rule of law and truth should prevail. . .

PHESCHEM INDUSTRIAL CORPORATION

From 77, RP slips to 85 in UN quality of life list

From page A1

International Monetary Fund and World Bank should be pressing rich countries to provide more help, according to the 367-page Human Development Report 2003 produced by the UN Development Program.

It also said that despite a widespread assumption that all countries were slowly getting richer, 54 were poorer now than they were in 1990, while life expectancy fell in 34 countries—primarily because of the HIV/AIDS epidemic—and 21 countries were hungrier than they were in 1990.

"For many countries, the 1990s were a decade of despair," the report said.

The report includes the UNDP's annual Human Development Index, which ranks 175 countries based on 2001 data on income per person, life expectancy, literacy and school enrollment.

The Philippines is 85 in the list, down from 77 last year.

For the third year in a row, Norway tops the list, followed by two other Scandinavian countries—Iceland and Sweden. The United States has dropped one notch to seventh but for the first time overtakes Canada, which was No. 1 in 2000.

In Asia, Japan ranks best at nine, followed by Hong Kong at 26, and Singapore at 28. Pakistan is lowest at 144.

The bottom 25 places on the list are all held by countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, with Sierra Leone in last position.

A separate Human Poverty Index for rich countries based on poverty illiteracy, unemployment and life expectancy has Sweden in top position and the United States last.

The report noted that although the United States had a higher income per capita than Sweden, it had proportionately more people living in poverty and more adults who were functionally illiterate—meaning they read below fifth-grade level.

"These indices show that two countries can have similar human development rankings, but still differ sharply on the proportion of their citizens who remain excluded and lack opportunities," said Sakiko Fukuda-Parr, chief author of the report.

Development goals

The report said that at the current rate, the world would fail to meet most of the "Millennium Development Goals" agreed upon by the world's countries in 2000.

These goals call for poverty to be cut by half by 2015 and for big steps forward in education, sanitation and health.

UNDP Administrator Mark Malloch-Brown said a "guerrilla assault" was needed on the so-called "Washington Consensus" that set out the general policies used by the IMF and the World Bank, including an emphasis on careful control of public spending, tax reform, trade liberalization and privatization.

"The IMF and the World Bank should no longer set these kinds of ceilings" on spending, he said. "These measures were introduced at a time when finances were leaking red ink all over the place and there was an urgent need to stabilize. The strategy had its time and place. The Washington Consensus did some good things, but people stuck with it too long—and it wasn't enough."

The report cited the case of Malawi, which

'Chorizo' maker brings home P54-M bacon

From page A1

and those of his five children, a man who makes and peddles chorizo (native sausage) won the jackpot prize of P54,031,158.30 in Sunday's 6/49 Superlotto.

Thaddeo (not his real name) was the only one who got the winning combination of 46 (his age) and 4, 6, 9, 15 and 20 (the ages of his children), according to a staff member of the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) in Cebu.

A government official, who is a close friend of the winner, said Thaddeo had been maintaining the lotto number combination for several months now.

The new millionaire bought his ticket from the lotto outlet owned by Rosco Rosco in Barangay Ermita, this city.

Rosco already received his share of P500,000 last Monday, according to the PCSO personnel.

Thaddeo and his wife went to Manila on Monday to claim his prize at the PCSO main office, their friend said. The couple immediately deposited the money in a bank, he added.

Thaddeo earns a living by making chorizo and selling them at a public market in Carbon. His wife works as a secretary in a government office.

The couple refused to be interviewed. Their neighbors said they thought the couple had won only P28,000 for getting five of the six-number combination.

The government official said the couple did not say what they planned to do with the money. They continued their usual routine yesterday, he said.

Thaddeo was the 21st lotto jackpot winner since the online lottery started in 1997, according to records of the PCSO.

A PCSO official, who also asked for anonymity, said the biggest superlotto jackpot prize of P135 million was won in January.

has produced a strategy for reducing poverty based on IMF and World Bank guidelines. But the plan will not achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

"Malawi requires far more donor assistance, as do many other countries in similar circumstances," the report said, adding:

"Rather than being told to lower their sights, they should be aided in achieving the goals, with the IMF and World Bank helping to mobilize the needed additional assistance."

The report also said a total reliance on market forces and increased trade to achieve development would not succeed.

"Public interventions are necessary to set the preconditions for market-led economic growth," said Fukuda-Parr.

The IMF had no immediate comment on the UN report when contacted by The Associated Press.

China's approach

According to the UNDP, more than 1 billion people around the world live in extreme poverty, with South Asia suffering the highest percentage after Sub-Saharan Africa.

In South Asia, 36.6 percent of the population lives on less than US\$1 a day, while in Sub-Saharan Africa, 49 percent falls into this category.

The report praised China's approach to fighting poverty.

China's population is 1.3 billion, of whom more than 200 million live in extreme poverty. This number has been cut by half over the past decade—a success linked not only to China's enormous economic growth but also to

its efforts to productively employ society's have-nots, said Santosh Mehrotra, one of the report's authors.

China's reforms are "why the poor are coming out of poverty," Mehrotra said at a news conference in Bangkok. "The pace of growth matters, but the pattern of growth matters even more. The focus needs to be on sectors where the poor are employed."

Mehrotra added: "China has been key be-

cause of economic and policy reforms, focusing on agriculture and small-to-medium enterprises."

Asked about China's success despite its authoritarian system, Mehrotra said China was "a strong state capable of decentralizing."

Although Chinese people have "less voice and participation than one would like to see," the government is "responsive even if it is not democratic," he said.

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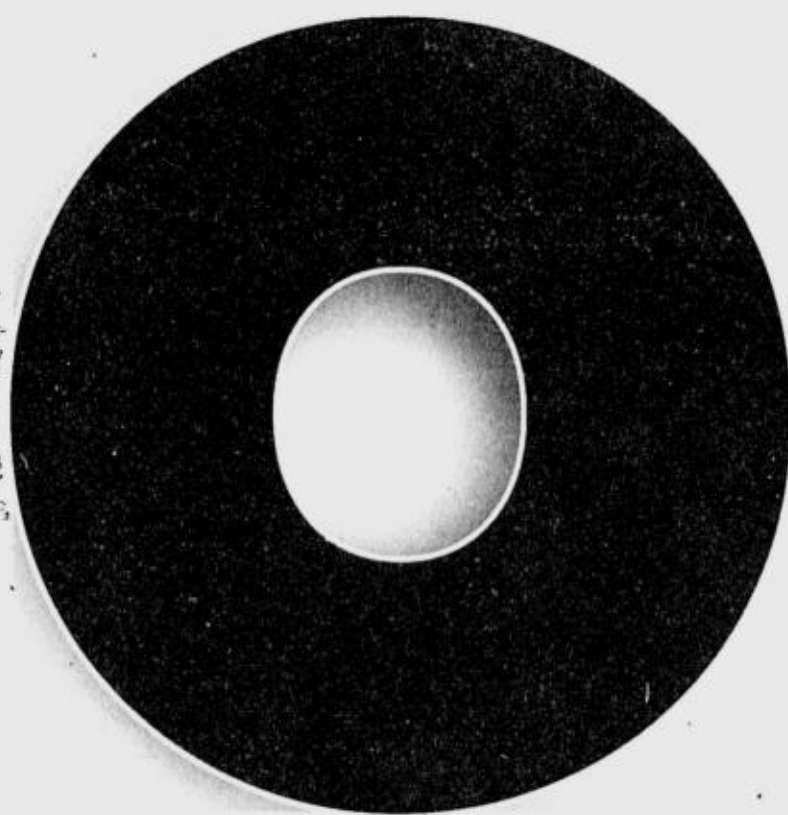
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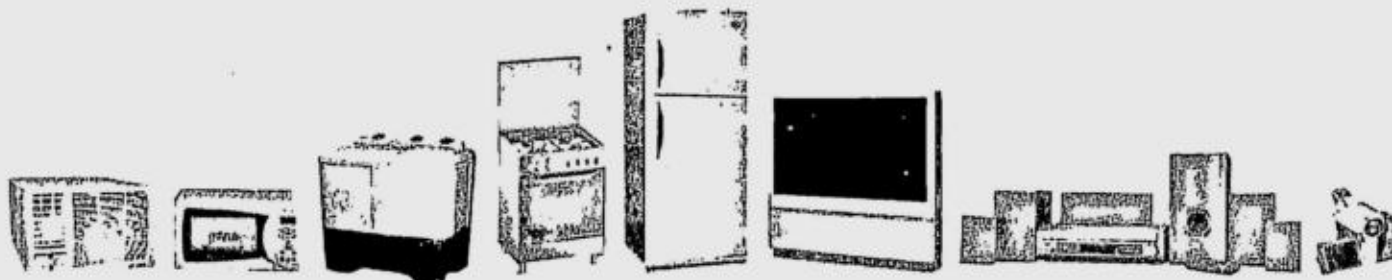
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Editor in Chief LETTY JIMENEZ-MAGSANO
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Raw deal

HAS the administration run out of loyal friends and supporters that it must now give away rich sinecures to the likes of Ernesto Maceda? Earlier this year, the spokesperson of ousted President Joseph Estrada during his impeachment trial and former ambassador to the United States was offered a directorship in San Miguel Corp. The offer did not come from his close political ally and patron, Eduardo M. Cojuangco who serves as SMC chair and whose share holdings entitle him to three seats in the SMC board. Instead the nomination was proposed by President Macapagal-Arroyo herself.

Maceda said he took the President's offer as a "sincere gesture of reconciliation" and so he agreed to accept it. But he immediately withdrew his acceptance as soon as he learned that Chairperson Haydee Yorac of the Presidential Commission on Good Government was opposing it. Anyway, he added, quoting a friend, it was "not a choice" position.

Maceda's friend was right of course. A directorship that pays six figures monthly can hardly compare with some really choice government positions, such as those in Congress and the Executive branch, where kickbacks from contracts can run to millions of pesos. But his disparagement of the SMC board seat notwithstanding, Maceda showed at the very least bad judgment in this instance.

In her letter sent to the Malacañang Search Committee, Yorac explained why putting Maceda on the SMC board would not serve the government's interest. She noted that Maceda was closely associated with Cojuangco from whom the government was seeking to recover ill-gotten wealth, including SMC shares. By nominating an "alter ego of Cojuangco," Yorac said, the government would be going against its own legal position that Cojuangco had amassed ill-gotten wealth during the martial law years. "We will be contradicting the public policy enshrined in the Constitution mandating the state to take positive and effective measures against graft and corruption," she warned. Besides, she added, it would be inconsistent with the Supreme Court ruling that the funds from the coconut levy that Cojuangco used to buy SMC shares were "prima facie public in character."

By nominating Maceda, Yorac also said, the government would also betray the six million coconut farmers who have been fighting to recover "more than P100 billion in assets illegitimately acquired by Cojuangco from coconut levy funds."

It is not just Maceda's connections with Cojuangco that is a problem. It is Maceda himself. Just a little over two years ago, Maceda was arrested and charged with rebellion for helping incite Estrada loyalists to storm the gates of Malacañang. Maceda seems to have easily gotten off the hook on that one, but must he now be rewarded so well and so soon in the name of reconciliation?

Unless Ms Macapagal believes that the aborted May 1 revolt was nothing more serious than a picnic, she wouldn't even have considered Maceda for the position. And unless Maceda takes the Filipino people for forgetful fools, he wouldn't have accepted the offer.

But then the campaign season is almost upon us and it is time for winning friends, making deals and forging political alliances. Maceda is president of the Nationalist People's Coalition, the administration Lakas-CMD's biggest coalition partner of which Cojuangco is chair. If Cojuangco himself isn't going to have another crack at the presidency, having them on one's side can be critical in winning the elections. Who said Ms Macapagal is not running?

Forever young

KATHARINE Hepburn seemed forever young—both as the beauty who took 1940s Hollywood by storm and later as the crotchety old aunt who could endure anything.

But Sunday, at age 96, she died. Ten years ago, she said she didn't fear death; after all, "it's how you live that really counts." And live, she did.

In her 1992 autobiography, "Me," Miss Hepburn accurately credited her stardom to a unique combination of breeding, egotism and luck.

For all her confidence, Ms Hepburn was best when she revealed insecurity behind the brashness. In interviews about "The African Queen," Ms Hepburn, then 45, reflected, "I became a star before my experience and talent merited it." On film and in life, she had an endearing way of mixing vulnerability and self-confidence. No wonder America loved her.

The Philadelphia Inquirer



Put bus terminals outside Metro limits

THE METRO Manila Development Authority (MMDA) will ban provincial buses from picking up passengers along streets within Metro Manila. These big lumbering buses contribute greatly to the congestion within the metropolis when they stop to load and unload passengers on city streets. They will be allowed to load passengers only in the big bus terminals to be set up along Edsa, from East Avenue, through Quezon Avenue almost to North Avenue, for northbound buses, and along the South Super Highway near Magallanes Village for those going south. I think part of the compound of the National Food Authority in Taguig will be the terminal for buses going east. The existing bus terminals inside Metro limits will be closed, the MMDA said. After all, provincial buses are for the provinces and they have no business operating within city limits.

I agree, but since provincial buses are meant for the provinces, then they should not enter Metro Manila at all. Their terminals should be outside Metro limits, beyond Valenzuela in the north, and beyond Muntinlupa in the south. There are more than enough city buses to take passengers to and from these terminals.

This arrangement has many advantages over the present MMDA proposal. There are wide-open spaces outside Metro. Land there is still cheap so the government won't have to spend much to acquire property for the terminals. The area along Edsa in the vicinity of Quezon Avenue is already congested. All the streets around it—North, East, West and Timog Avenues—as well as the Quezon Memorial Circle leading to Commonwealth and University avenues—and of course Edsa itself—are already heavy with traffic. Imagine the traffic jams there when you add hundreds of big provincial buses going in and out of the terminal.

No doubt the MMDA thought of using this area because it saw the open strip along Edsa. But most of these areas are already privately owned, and this is prime property. So imagine the price of real estate there which the government will have to pay for. Besides, the buildings

As I See It

Neal H. Cruz



beyond the strip are government offices. The noise of the buses will surely disturb the work in these offices. Furthermore, the area across it on Edsa is a residential, aside from the GMA 7 studios at the corner of Timog. Imagine what the noise pollution will do to the people there.

The same thing is true with the proposed terminal near Magallanes Village, which is a high-class residential enclave. There already is a terminal for buses and jeepneys in Alabang. Why not just use this and expand it?

The MMDA-proposed locations of the terminals will surely get plenty of opposition from Quezon City and Makati residents because they will make life miserable for them.

One important thing that our policy planners have forgotten from the national government, the Department of Transportation, the Department of Trade, the Board of Investments, the MMDA, to the local government units—is that thousands of new and second-hand vehicles are being added every year to those already in the streets, but very few additional streets are being constructed nationwide.

In other countries, vehicles are phased out after several years, to give way to new ones. But in the Philippines, once a vehicle rolls out of the factory, it lasts almost forever. Filipino workers can make them last for many decades. Just look at the jeepney, which is a relic of World War II.

And it is unfair to forcibly phase them out while they are still serviceable because of the extremely high costs of new vehicles here. So what is happening is that there is a

population explosion of vehicles in a few years, not only Metro Manila will be congested with traffic but the whole Philippines. We have to curb this vehicle population explosion.

Drive around the metropolis at night and you will see that we have already reached a saturation point. Vehicles are double-parked on most streets, even in the narrow ones in the poorer areas. Most vehicle owners don't have garages for their vehicles. In Tokyo and other cities, you will not be allowed to acquire a vehicle unless you can show a title to a garage or a parking lot. Why don't we do that here?

In New York City, it is so expensive to maintain a car in the city because of parking problems. Parking fees are so prohibitive that New Yorkers prefer not to have cars. But that is because public transportation is so convenient, plentiful and cheap there. The same with Tokyo and other first world cities.

But in the Philippines, people are forced to buy their own vehicles because using public transportation is a hassle precisely because of traffic jams brought on by too many vehicles.

The elevated rails are supposed to take most of the load off the streets, but the existing trains are already overloaded but the street traffic is still heavy. You'd think that the management of Light Rail Transit and the Metrorail would have sense enough to add more trains and coaches, and earn more money. But they are not doing that. Makes you wonder why.

And does the government have any long-term plans to solve the traffic problem since it is obvious it cannot solve it now with the band-aid, piece-meal cures they are using?

A sensible plan would be to develop the railroad, the river, the seas and the air to ferry people to their destinations, since we have neither the money nor the space to build more streets. Is the government thinking about it?

The messenger gets shot again

THERE'S THE RUB

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now with the Department of Labor.

Dee doesn't like what the INQUIRER has done. Even if true, he says, Anvil is an isolated case. The garments industry in general treats its workers fairly. Anvil is just a very small fish in a very large pond, and to suggest that it represents the whole pond is iniquitous. "The media should remember that our major customers abroad could pick up the story, and this could make them drop their orders. That is why I am reacting this way. Can you imagine the economic impact and dislocation you have caused just because of this one small company?"

His complaint is unreasonable of course. First off, you have to ask what the Confederation of Garments Exporters is doing to cleanse its ranks of scoundrels. Dee is right when he says news about a small company like Anvil treating its workers like chattel slaves could ruin the industry. The solution is not to prevent media from reporting it, the solution is to stop it. The confederation may not have police powers but it can always compel wayward owners to toe the line on pain of being reported to DOLE or the police. The principle remains: What gives something a good press is truth, not advertisement. Or worse, silence.

The labor unions of course have an entirely different view of the state of the garments industry. Which is that Anvil's case is by no means the exception, it is the rule. Or if it is an exception, it is only in degree. Other companies may not resort to keeping their workers awake by drugs, but they exploit them just as ruthlessly. By paying less than the minimum, by not paying overtime, by not providing safe

working conditions. That charge is not easily dispelled by assurances that the confederation will investigate it.

It is not the business of the INQUIRER to make the economic picture of the country look good. That is the business of business. Even if Anvil's case were not representative of the general case, it has to be reported by the fact of its being there. Acsa Ramirez's case is also an exception. The president does not make the mistake every day of pointing out the whistleblower in public as the culprit. Teodoro Bacani's case is probably also an exception, though some people might argue his case is far more common than we think. It is not every day, someone files a case against a bishop for sexual harassment.

The stakes in both cases are high. The first stands to ruin the credibility of the president, the second to subvert the moral standing of the Catholic Church. As impact goes, it is at least comparable to the one Dee fears, if not more. That is not a reason for Ramirez or the complainant in Bacani's case to bite their tongues and slink away. Certainly, that is not a reason for the INQUIRER or any other newspaper to keep its silence and look the other way. That is a matter of fundamental justice. And matters of fundamental justice may not be held hostage to such things as the honor of the presidency or the moral standing of the Church.

Nor, indeed, the good image of garments exporters. If foreign buyers stop buying garments from us a result of this—though highly unlikely, the post-Seattle activists have been trying to blacklist US corporations that import stuff from South companies that employ child and conscripted labor, to no great avail—that won't be the fault of the INQUIRER or the workers who refuse to be turned into drug-crazed zombies. That will be the fault of Anvil, and the confederation that governs it.

Rather than ruining the image of the country, the INQUIRER's story on Anvil stands to improve it. It shows there's still a great deal of freedom in it.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 9, 2003



Trade issues in Bush's African visit

FEATURE

Jodie Ginsberg

JOHANNESBURG—US President George W. Bush faces a tough battle on his African tour this week to convince his hosts that Washington's trade policies have done more to help the continent than to harm it.

Africa accounts for some 13 percent of the world's people, but only 2 percent of its trade. Critics of the current global trade system say the damage caused by protectionist policies like those of the United States dwarfs the purses it throws out in aid for food, education and health.

Nowhere is this clearer than in agriculture where aid agencies say protection in key industries like cotton is helping to keep Africa desperately poor.

Aid agency Oxfam said in a recent report that US cotton subsidies—some \$3.9 billion in 2001/02—had helped to depress world prices through overproduction, slashing earnings for some of the world's poorest countries for whom cotton is the major source of foreign exchange and government revenue.

"Mali received \$37 million in aid in 2001 but lost \$43 million as a result of lower export earnings," Oxfam said. This was despite the fact that West African cotton was much cheaper to produce than that of United States.

"If George wants to help us, let him subsidize our cotton in the same way he subsidizes American cotton," Mene Diallo, president of Mali's Syvaco cotton union, challenged last week.

US officials play down concerns over domestic subsidies, saying Africa is not a big producer of crops like corn, cotton and wheat which US farmers receive subsidies to produce.

West Africa alone exports around 15 percent of world cotton.

But cotton—and trade in general—is unlikely to get much of a look-in during Bush's flying visit to West Africa.

Ironically the US president's main planned visit in Senegal was to an old slave fort—through which thousands of slaves passed en route to build the American cotton industry his govern-

ment is now supporting with subsidies.

After Senegal, Bush was heading for South Africa—the continent's economic powerhouse—from where he plans to visit Botswana and Uganda, two of its relative success stories. He will wind up his trip in Nigeria, the continent's most populous nation and biggest oil producer.

Uganda is the only country in the world that has successfully turned around HIV/AIDS prevalence, while Botswana, although it boasts strong economic growth, has one of the world's highest infection rates.

Activists have welcomed the US commitment to channel \$15 billion to fight the pandemic, but they say US bullying on behalf of big drugs companies through the World Trade Organization is delaying much-needed access to treatment.

A group of non-governmental organizations wrote to Bush this month saying a planned free trade agreement with some countries in southern Africa would delay the use of cheap medicines—generics—and could devastate a region with the highest rates of HIV/AIDS infection in the world.

The issue was likely to be a hot topic at Bush's meeting with South African President Thabo Mbeki. The country has more people living with AIDS or HIV than any other in the world—some 4.7 million people or more than one in nine.

But Mbeki was likely to tread cautiously with Bush on trade—despite news last week that the United States would cut off military aid to the country because it refused to give US citizens amnesty from the new International Criminal Court.

South Africa, along with trading partners Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia and Swaziland, is in

the process of negotiating a free trade agreement with the United States that is expected to double two-way trade between the groupings once it is finalized.

The United States hopes the deal with the Southern African Customs Union (Sacu) will level the playing field between the United States and Europe, which already has a free trade agreement with South Africa. Sacu believes an agreement will help to attract investment to, and promote development in, the region.

The regional grouping—the biggest US market in Africa—is seeking to improve on the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), a preferential trade agreement.

Under present US preferential arrangements, including AGOA, duty-free offers on products can be withdrawn to protect US companies from competition. Sacu wants to change so that Africa can invest confidently in industry development.

A number of other countries who have benefited from AGOA want to see the agreement bolstered, concerned that they are losing to free trade agreements negotiated elsewhere.

"We have for a long time fought to promote the manufacturing sector in Africa, with the goal of eradicating poverty," Mauritius Prime Minister Anerood Jugnauth said during a visit to the United States last month.

"It was understood that AGOA would have facilitated access to the American market of exports from lesser developed countries and allow them to modernize.

"But if every country can benefit from these preferences, as the United States has proposed by signing various free trade agreements around the world, then we discover that preferences for everyone are preferences for no one," he said.

Others argue AGOA—and US investment in Africa—does not go far or wide enough. Oxfam says US investment in sub-Saharan Africa represents less than one percent of its total investment abroad and three quarters of this is for oil.

REUTERS

Mastura in the Supreme Court

HONOLULU—Even before the recent appointment of former Rep. Dante Tinga to the Supreme Court seat vacated by retired Justice Vicente Mendoza, I had already heard or read about efforts to support the nomination of Datu Michael O. Mastura to the high court. I thought it was an excellent idea and had meant to write this earlier. Since there will be another vacancy in November to be created by the retirement of Justice Josue Bellosillo, I would like to join in current endeavors to forward the name of Datu Mastura for this vacant seat in November. I believe it's not too early to do this, since the Judicial Bar Council will need much time to carefully screen all the names submitted.

President Macapagal-Arroyo will have a rare opportunity to make a historic appointment—one that will not be routinely labeled by the media as "the latest Macapagal appointee to the high court." True, Mastura, if chosen, will be a Macapagal appointee, but his appointment will be different and unique, something that will not be dismissed as "politics as usual." For Mastura has much to recommend him and he will be a terrific asset to one of our most hallowed national institutions. Additionally, if President Macapagal were to decide ultimately to run for the presidency in 2004, her appointment of Mastura would be seen as a plus in terms of having secured for our highest court real expertise on Mindanao issues, which have confronted every presidential administration.

Mastura would bring the much-needed element of diversity—intellectual, academic, regional and ethnic—to the high court. Aside from being a respected lawyer, his academic training includes history, philosophy, social science and cultural and religious studies. He has functioned both as an academic scholar and as a dedicated practitioner in a vast array of fields—education, administration, legislation, peace negotiations, economic development, social work, constitutional convention work, etc. It's hard to top his record. Bringing all his grey matter and extensive experience in these various arenas would be a real boon to ranks of the Supreme Court. He has a first-rate expansive intellect that the court could use especially on some major issues confronting the nation, such as the continuing Mindanao conflict.

If I sound like I have known Mastura for a long time, I haven't. And I don't presume to be his personal friend or an authority on this man. I've only met him in person and got to know him better since November 2001, when he came as the key speaker in a short-term course on Mindanao undertaken by the Center for Philippine Studies at the University of Hawaii at Manoa. Since we had to invite experts in the field as guest lecturers, we solicited names from various sources, and a unanimous choice for the lead speaker was Mastura. I scoured the literature to get some data on his expertise and I was astounded not only by the breadth but also the depth of the topics he has written on in his long and productive career. He is simply a knockout. I learned a lot from simply reading him on such topics as Shari'a law and the Bangsamoro movement.

When he came to deliver his three lectures for the Mindanao seminar in Hawaii, he covered the whole gamut—from Islam to geography, philosophy, history, the environment, the Sulu and Maguindanao sultanates, peace-making, and other themes relevant to the development of Mindanao that we had never even heard before. He is not a narrow academic specialized in one field. He is a "big-picture" analyst. He even had an incisive discussion on genealogy and its role in situating "history from within." And consistent with his legal training, he carefully analyzed the treaties, protocols, conventions and other documents related to the Sulu trade, Maguindanao history, and the "age of Kudarat," to mention only a few topics. It was all very impressive in spite of the esoteric nature of some of the events or developments he was talking about.

I was to learn later that he is descended directly from Maguindanao royalty, being the great-great grandson of the famous Sultan Muhammad Dipatuan Kudarat—one of the most charismatic figures in Mindanao history. Mastura founded and eventually became president of the Sultan Kudarat Islamic Academy Foundation in Cotabato City in his native Maguindanao.

Aside from being a Member of Congress from 1987 to 1995, Mastura served as deputy minister of Muslim Affairs. But his expertise is not limited to Muslim issues. He was educated in secular institutions, such as the University of the Philippines where he obtained his Master of Laws degree after getting his Bachelor of Arts and Law degrees from Notre Dame University in Cotabato City. He has been a law professor for many years. He has also written extensively on economic development, and was a member at one time of the Mindanao Economic Development Council and the Southern Philippines Development Authority.

Well-known and recognized internationally, Mastura has been a member of official and professional delegations to a wide range of countries. He is invited frequently to sit in commissions and bodies dealing with minority issues. He has been on various fellowships for further study in prestigious international institutions. He is a familiar figure in the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), where he often contributes his ideas on the situation of the Muslim minority in the southern Philippines. In one of his papers for the OIC, he discussed how the cause of peace was damaged by the use of military force on the MILF in Cotabato between January and July 2000.

In another paper, Mastura traces the historic precedents and legal grounds for a "viable Moro nationhood," as indicated by a series of petitions all the way from 1916 to 2000. This is quite instructive and interesting but space limitations prevent us from going into full detail on these various options and petitions related to the Bangsamoro sovereignty movement. He notes that advocacy for the Bangsamoro people's right to choose between independence or remaining in a constitutional relationship with the "mother country" is recognized by the UN Declaration of Human Rights.

Mastura's basic knowledge of the law plus his other fields of expertise and experience in Muslim affairs, education, culture, history, philosophy and all the other areas I've mentioned above constitute a trove of talent that could only be added to the betterment of one of our most hallowed institutions.

Belinda A. Aquino is professor of Political Science and Asian Studies at the University of Hawaii at Manoa where she is also director of the Center for Philippine Studies.

'Arms are for hugging'

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David



"WE went in search of tears, but instead we found 'the strong women of this land,'" says Tessie Tomas in a video presentation on the displaced women of Mindanao.

A board member of Community and Family Services International (CFSI), a social development organization that works mainly with internally displaced people in the Philippines and elsewhere in Southeast Asia, Tessie traveled to Maguindanao and Cotabato two years ago to talk with "as many women as we could find" on their experiences with war and displacement. Tessie had come in the wake of the offensive ordered by former President Estrada, but even before she could return to the area as she had promised the women, Tessie despairs that the communities she had visited are once again embroiled in armed conflict. When will the people, but especially the women and children, ever achieve their dream of returning home and rebuilding their lives?

After returning from Cotabato and Maguindanao, Tessie recalls, "tulala ako (I was catatonic) for maybe three days." The impact of the reality she saw with her own eyes may have been too much, she concedes. "What I knew of Mindanao I knew only from news clips and stories," she says. "But when I paid a visit, I saw the people's poverty and hardship first-hand." Tessie recalls one mother's story, about sending off her child to school with only coffee to sustain him. "And I asked myself: How lucky can we be in Manila? How many things do we take for granted?"

BUT the stories that Tessie harvested tell of more than just hunger or deprivation. "Babu," a 91-year-old refugee in Barangay General Luna, Carmen, North Cotabato, remembered a lifetime of continual displacement, starting with the Japanese Occupation in the 1940's, to the covert war between the "Ilagas" and "Black Shirts" in the 1960's, the insurgency and military campaign during the martial law era, and the "all-out wars" against the MILF.

Babu's body tells its own story. During the "Ilagas" war, she was hit in the breast with a bullet, causing a stinging sensation all over her

body. "Her husband tried to carry her, but she refused and told him she could manage as she walked out of the farm....(Clutching) her dangling breast with one hand and trying to stop the profuse bleeding with the other, she went back home. Medical assistance was not available at that time, so she took care of her wounds herself by applying traditional herbal medicines. Today, she says that every time she hears gunshots, her wound still aches even though she knows that it had healed a long time ago. 'Some wounds are so deep, they don't heal easily,' she said with her eyes looking out into the fields."

"Sometimes, all that displaced people need is for others to listen to them," notes Steve Muncy, executive director of CFSI since its establishment in 1981. It was Babu, in fact, who both challenged and complimented the CFSI team when she said: "You listen," which is what they have used as the title of a report on a pilot project in conflict-affected areas of Central Mindanao.

IT was also Babu who articulated the people's dearest wish. "I want to go home," she said toward the end of the video. "I want to go home so I can die there. If I have to stay longer here (in the evacuation center), then I might as well die now."

"The people have a strong desire to return home," avers Celia Santos, CFSI project coordinator in Central Mindanao. Perhaps even more motivated to return than their parents are the children of displaced families, who dream of resuming their studies and thereby stake a claim on their future.

"Arms are for Hugging" is how CFSI has dubbed its return-to-school program, because, says CFSI

board chair Dr. Jaime Galvez Tan "we say arms should be used by children to hug each other and to hug their parents."

Last February 8, recalls Santos, 500 children marched from an evacuation center to the site of their elementary school, which had been burned down, singing with the aid of loudspeakers "so that combatants on both sides would know that children were in that place." With assistance from government agencies, especially the DSWD and the DepEd and the voluntary labor of children and parents, they were able to reconstruct the Inug-ug Elementary School in Pagalungan, Maguindanao, recently visited by no less than President Macapagal-Arroyo.

On July 16, says Santos proudly, the school will hold graduation ceremonies for the first batch of returnee-students, 16 of them, who have been able to pursue their education with support from CFSI and government agencies and NGO's who provide psycho-social support, nutrition supplements and even school supplies.

"OUR dream is to see the children become the Noraydas of tomorrow," remarked Muncy. He was referring to Norayda Karim, a social worker who is part of CFSI's "Arms Are for Hugging" project. The child of an internally displaced family herself, Norayda says she grounds her commitment to the children in her desire "not to have this happen to my own children."

"Please tell the people that Mindanao really needs help," she appealed during the press conference. "Please tell them that arms are not only for holding weapons, but are also for holding books, writing and learning." Education is a necessity especially in conflict-affected areas, says Norayda. "The children really want an education. We have to show the rest of the country that not all Mindanaoans are bombers or kidnappers."

Indeed, the work of "rebuilding lives," which is CFSI's stated mission, requires more than just rebuilding homes or schools. It also means waging peace and reconstructing communities. It means listening and responding to people's needs, hopes and stories.

Japanese in the struggle for independence

SOME people ask how I sustain this column despite being in Japan for six months. It is flattering that some readers think I carry around all my material, weightlessly, in my head. Actually, I sent 25 kilos of books over by courier and still found myself 50 kilos overweight when I left Manila last April. Fortunately, they did not weigh my carry-on luggage, containing notes I wouldn't risk checking-in, this must have been another 20 kilos. One way to travel light would be to rely entirely on the 55-volume compilation of documents known as "Blair and Robertson," all compact in a two CD-Rom set minted by the Bank of the Philippine Islands. I brought this but haven't even opened it because I have found much column material in the library of the Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Kyoto University.

Last week on the invitation of Prof. Takefumi Terada of Sophia University I consulted the Mauro Garcia Collection in the Sophia University Library. Garcia was the leading Filipino bibliographer of his time and his collection is another pilgrimage site for Filipino researchers in Japan. While the collection boasts of rare books I focused on the numerous scrapbooks he compiled on various historical topics.

One of the slim folders that caught my interest was, "Japanese who aided the Filipinos in their struggles for independence." Since Japanese are always *kontrabida* in our World War II movies this was quite new to me. The typescript had no author, date, or sources of information. These yellowing pieces of bond paper are stamped lightly on the back with "Ministry of Foreign Affairs" so I dated it to the Marcos years when the Department of Foreign Affairs briefly became a "Ministry." Government paper marked "For Official Use Only" is not seen today, just like government vehicles that were once prominently painted with the same warning. The current joke is that some government vehicles today should be marked "For Offi-

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

cial Use ALSO."

There are 14 names on the list, alphabetically arranged, starting with Dionisio Fernandez (no Japanese name recorded) a Christian Japanese resident of Manila who participated in the Tondo conspiracy of 1587-88. He was executed together with Magat Salamat (son of Lakandula), and Agustin de Legaspi (nephew of Lakandula and son-in-law of a Bornean sultan). Fernandez was described as the "first Japanese to sacrifice his life for the cause of Filipino freedom." Really?

Japanese invasion of the Philippines is often seen in the context of World War II but it goes all the way back to the late 16th century. For example, in 1595, Benavides, the archbishop of Manila, reported that some "disgruntled Tagalogs" had written the Taiko Hideyoshi to come to the Philippines and drive off their white oppressors. Many of us cannot imagine a time when Filipinos looked to Japan for liberation from the Spaniards. Hideyoshi might have considered the idea but then he was too busy waging war in Korea to take on the Spanish Philippines.

It is not well-known that Andres Bonifacio had a secret meeting with the Japanese consul in Manila and some visiting Japanese naval officers in May 1896 and sought Japanese support for the Philippine revolution.

The man who arranged the meeting and acted as interpreter was a certain Jose Moritara Tagawa, a resident of Bocaue, married to a Filipina, who was introduced to the Supremo by Pio Valenzuela.

The names that caught my interest were veterans of the Sino-Japanese War who fought on our side during the Filipino-American War. Their names would have been lost to history if not for this typescript in the Garcia collection. These men are: Lt. Sintetu Nishiuchi, Lt. Asahiro Inatomi, Lt. Keizo Miyai, Lt. Kesakichi Mizumati, Sgt. Major Saburo Nakamori and Sgt. Shinobu Masuda. Of course more research must be undertaken not only to trace these men but also to find out their motivation. Did they relate with our struggle for independence or were they mercenaries—guns for hire?

Whatever their reasons some were highly regarded like Capt. Chizuno Iwamoto who served as flag officer of Emilio Aguinaldo during the Filipino-American War. These men arrived in Manila toward the end of June 1899 and were met by a Japanese businessman based in Manila named M. Tagawa who arranged their passage by sailboat across Manila Bay to Orani, Bataan and from there by land to the Tarlac headquarters of Emilio Aguinaldo. They were led by a certain Captain Tei Hara on whom we have some biographical information. Born in 1864 in Ina, Nagano he studied in the Imperial Military Academy and eventually rose to the rank of captain of the Imperial Bodyguard Division. Captain Hara fought under Gen. Tomas Mascardo in Zambales and Bataan and was even cited for gallantry in action. He returned to Japan and fought in the Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905), and was promoted to lieutenant colonel. He died in 1933. What makes Hara stand out is that his deathbed request was for his sister or her heir to watch and wait for the independence of the Philippines. As soon as the Philippines was independent this news should be reported to him at his grave.

History reveals that Japan was not just the monster of World War II but in some ways part of our yet unwritten history.

Comments are welcome at aocampo@ateneo.edu

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Deeper regard of tuna industry woes

AN ARTICLE in this paper mentioned that "117,000 workers in the tuna canning industry" stood to benefit from the European Union's lowering of tariff for tuna products from the Philippines ("GMA, Roxas score victory for RP tuna industry," PDI, 6/30/03).

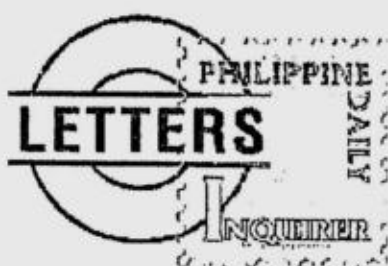
I checked out this figure with several sources on the Internet and found out that the correct number of workers in the tuna canning industry is 17,000. Aside from this, there are 20,000 fishers called tuna hand-liners who use a unique hook-and-line method to catch big-sized tuna, and another 15,000-20,000 fishers who either use the long-line method or work as crew in commercial tuna fishing using purse seine nets. Then there are the administrative employees and other secondary workers in the tuna industry like the wet market vendors. Overall, the tuna industry—which is entirely based in Mindanao—employed an estimated 60,000 people in 2001. In 1999, before the Asian financial crisis hit the country, 98,000 workers were employed in the tuna industry.

The lowering of tariff for tuna in the Eu-

ropean market will benefit the canneries and fishers who supply them with small- to medium-sized tuna. These fishers are those who work in commercial fishing using a purse seine net. But the use of purse seine nets are now unsustainable because its relatively finer mesh catches even juvenile tuna. There is the danger that greater demand for tuna exports under a lowered tariff would only worsen overfishing by commercial fishing operators using purse seine net. It should be noted that a study by Aprieto (1995) concluded that a number of local tuna stocks were already substantially decreasing.

Thus, the short and medium-term benefit of increased tuna exports must be weighed against its long-term sustainability. How long can the local tuna industry last, assuming there will be significant increases in fishing effort in the next five years due to the lowered tariff in the European market? Rather than leave the answer to chance, the government must now conduct tuna stock assessments and enforce the appropriate regulation measures in tuna fishing.

In addition, the government must ad-



dress the plight of other players in the tuna industry, particularly the hand-liners. They are facing unfair competition from Taiwanese tuna that illegally enters the port of Davao and finds its way into the local wet market and even the Japanese market. According to the Tuna Handliners Alliance of South Cotabato, Sarangani and General Santos, about 1.2 metric tons of Taiwanese tuna are smuggled into Davao port daily. Because of this, the price of sashimi-grade tuna has fallen from P200 to P120 per kilo, drastically reducing the income of 20,000 tuna hand-liners and their estimated 100,000 dependents.

—JAIME ESCOBAR JR.,
Block 16 Lot 49 Sugartowne Subd.,
Batasan Hills, Quezon City



ADB should hear cry of the poor

THE RECENTLY held Asian Development Bank (ADB) board meeting last June 30 would have been a success had representatives of the bank and the government heeded the plea of thousands of workers who rallied near the ADB headquarters in Mandaluyong.

Instead of considering a forum for the people's organization that picketed on the streets, police and anti-rioting team welcomed the protesters with water hoses. The police even shoved several ralliers. Fortunately no one was hurt.

The ralliers hoped that they would be given a forum in the ADB meeting. Unfortunately, the lord of the loans played deaf. The workers were instead dispersed and harassed. Perhaps, the hum of the air-conditioner inside the ADB office and the

Shangri-La Hotel drowned the chants of the sunburned workers picketing outside.

ADB officials must listen to the cry of the underprivileged workers if they want to preserve its image as "poverty alleviator." There is a need for the bank to revise its accountability mechanism. Its inspection policy should effectively involve trade unions and civil society organizations. There must be an internal ombudsman who will entertain cases lodged with the inspection committee of the ADB to avoid fraud by politicians who obviously are eyeing their own vested interests on the bank's loan-assisted projects.

The ADB should properly interpret its inspection policy provisions in favor of the claimants affected by certain dubious projects and encourage a full-options approach

that stresses a public sector option, broader-based ownership, and re-regulation at a time when an acquisitive private sector is becoming increasingly irresponsible.

The workers trust that economic restructuring under this full-options approach will also encourage options other than just privatization. With greater participation by stakeholders, the ADB can ensure a project process with greater stakeholder ownership thereby strengthening economic democracy and increasing the political space for the poorest of the poor in developing countries.

ALLAN MONTANO, co-chairperson, The Asian Labor Network for International Financial Institute (ALNI) and vice president, Federation of Free Workers (FFW), 1943 Taft Ave., Malate, Manila

House the PRC in better conditions

EVERY academic year, our public schools need more teachers. But why is the Licensure Examination of Teachers set in August? How anachronistic!

Applying at PRC is quite a hassle, be-

cause of its cramped space, there are so many clients to be serviced especially those coming from all over the country. The old compound needs to be re-planned...decentralized with regional offices if not provincial satellites. This

will also relieve traffic. Move the Professional Regulatory Commission to more hospitable and appropriate quarters.

—Joseph Ting Gannaban,
jogannab@yahoo.com

Overdue salaries still unpaid

I'm writing to complain to the authorities concerned about the unpaid and often delayed salaries (and no benefits) of the casual employees of the MMDA's sidewalk clearing operations despite the risks they face in their jobs. Most of the people in our neighborhood have the same MMDA jobs and practically the same stories like my brother-in-law, who lives with us with his family, (with four children). I am the only one supporting them right now, even to his daily fare to get to work.

He hasn't been paid since February to

April 2003, including holidays and overtime. He got paid for the month of May. Nothing has come for June. The MMDA office in Pasig City, always promise to process it but it seems it's already forgotten.

I have the feeling that there is something fishy happening and I don't know if MMDA Chair Bayani Fernando knows it. I can only hope that this crucial matter is given the attention it deserves and the little peoples' welfare also be listened to.

—GINA DELOSO,
Novaliches, Quezon City

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The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

W. House: Bush wrong on Iraq uranium

WASHINGTON—Amid questions about prewar intelligence, the White House is acknowledging that President George W. Bush was incorrect when he said in his State of the Union address that Iraq recently had sought significant quantities of uranium in Africa.

Democrats in Congress also have questioned how the Bush administration used US intelligence on Iraq's weapons programs.

Bush said in his address to Congress in January that the British government had learned that Saddam Hussein recently sought significant quantities of uranium in Africa.

The president's statement in the

State of the Union was incorrect because it was based on forged documents from the African nation of Niger, White House spokesman Ari Fleischer said Monday.

"The president's statement was based on the predicate of the yellow cake" uranium "from Niger," Fleischer told reporters. "So given the fact that the report on the

yellow cake did not turn out to be accurate, that is reflective of the president's broader statement."

Claims about Saddam's weapons of mass destruction were a primary justification for the war, but US forces have yet to find any such weapons. The House and Senate intelligence panels are looking into prewar intelligence on Iraq and how it was used by the Bush administration.

Fleischer's remarks follow assertions by an envoy sent by the CIA to Africa to investigate allegations about Iraq's nuclear weapons program. The envoy,

Joseph Wilson, said Sunday that the Bush administration manipulated his findings, possibly to strengthen the rationale for war.

Wilson, a former US ambassador to the West African nation of Gabon, was dispatched in February 2002 to explore whether Iraq tried to buy uranium from Niger.

Writing in a New York Times op-ed piece, Wilson said it did not take him long "to conclude that it was highly doubtful that any such transaction had ever taken place."

In an interview on NBC-TV's "Meet the Press," Wilson insisted his

doubts about the purported Iraq-Niger connection reached the highest levels of government, including Vice President Dick Cheney's office.

In fact, he said, Cheney's office inquired about the purported Niger-Iraq link.

"The question was asked of the CIA by the office of the vice president. The office of the vice president, I am absolutely convinced, received a very specific response to the question it asked, and that response was based upon my trip out there," Wilson said.

Yet nearly a year after he had

returned and briefed CIA officials, the assertion that Saddam was trying to obtain uranium from Africa was included in Bush's State of the Union address.

The International Atomic Energy Agency told the United Nations in March that the information about the uranium procurement efforts was based on forged documents.

After Bush repeated the British claim in his State of the Union address, the purported letters between Iraq and Niger were turned over to the United Nations, which found them to be forged. AP

Blair rejects claims he misled UK over Iraq

LONDON—Prime Minister Tony Blair, fighting for his political reputation, on Tuesday rejected claims he misled Britain over the case for war in Iraq despite the non-appearance of weapons of mass destruction.

"I refute any suggestion we misled parliament or the country totally," Blair told a parliamentary committee.

"I think we did the right thing in relation to Iraq. I stand 100 percent by it and I think our intelligence services gave us the correct intelligence and information at the time," he added.

Britain and America waged war on Iraq on the basis that former leader Saddam Hussein's weapons of mass destruction posed a serious threat, but the failure so far to unearth those weapons has caused a furor over the case made for war.

The credibility of Blair's government has come under attack and the weapons row has dented his standing in opinion polls.

Blair's appearance before parliament's Liaison Committee comes one day after a separate committee cleared him and a top aide of a claim the government "sexed up" evidence of Iraq's weapons but raised serious questions over the motives for war.

The Foreign Affairs Committee accused Blair of misrepresenting a dossier on Iraq's weapons to parliament, part of which had been lifted from a student thesis. It also said he had given undue prominence to questionable intelligence.

"The moment that we realized we had made a mistake, we admitted it," Blair said of the so-called "dodgy dossier" including the student thesis.

The weapons row has been exacerbated by a running dispute with the BBC, which in May quoted an unnamed intelligence source as saying officials exaggerated data to justify war.

The government has demanded an apology from the BBC, which the broadcaster has refused.

Answering a barrage of questions from senior members of parliament, Blair rejected claims that the decision to go to war was pre-agreed with the United States.

He also refuted the Foreign Affairs Committee's conclusion that the jury was still out on Iraq's weapons. He said he had no doubt that Saddam was trying to reconstitute weapons programmes.

"The jury is not out, it is not out at all," he said. Reuters

British report reignites debate in Australia

SYDNEY—Australia's government came under renewed criticism Tuesday for its decision to join the US and Britain in invading Iraq after a British parliamentary report questioned the war's justification.

Opposition Labor Party leader Simon Crean said the British report underscored concerns the three governments used faulty or misleading intelligence concerning Iraq's weapons programs to justify the war.

And he said the issue raised worrying questions about the Australian intelligence community's ability to effectively combat terrorism.

Crean notably chided Prime Minister John Howard for repeating incorrect US reports about ousted Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein's alleged attempts to develop nuclear weapons.

"I think we have got to get to the bottom of this because Australians want a prime minister who tells the truth," Crean said.

"And they will make that judgment based on the evidence that comes before our inquiry," he said, referring to parliamentary hearings due to begin next month into the government's handling of the war.

Howard on Tuesday denied basing his decision to send 2,000 troops to war in Iraq purely on US or British arguments, saying all intelligence reports on Iraq's weapons were assessed independently by local agencies.

"It is true that we relied overwhelmingly on both British and American intelligence (but) we made our own assessments," he said. AFP

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Ambushes in Iraq kill 3 US troops in 24 hours

BAGHDAD—Gunfire and explosions in Iraq killed two more US servicemen and wounded one British and four American soldiers. But despite the worsening guerrilla warfare, the US-led administration called two new city councils to order—one in the southern Shiite city of Najaf and the other in the chaotic capital.

The councils—which join other municipal governments with limited powers emerging around Iraq—are expected to act as a proving ground for national leaders, as the United States tries to lay the ground for an eventual transition to democracy.

US advisers on Monday also announced an initial economic agenda, including establishment of an independent Iraqi central bank and plans to rid the country of bank notes bearing the image of Saddam Hussein—after printing millions of them last month.

30 deaths

In two days of attacks in Baghdad, three US soldiers have been killed, raising the total to 30 American combat deaths since major hostilities ended May 1.

In the latest slayings, a roadside bomb killed one soldier traveling in an Army convoy Monday, and a second American was shot to death in a Sunday night gun battle in the troubled Sunni Muslim neighborhood of Azamiyah, the military said. Both soldiers belonged to the Army's 1st Armored Division, the Germany-based unit occupying Baghdad.

Also Sunday, a US soldier was shot and killed drinking a soda in the shade at Baghdad University.

A British soldier was wounded

in a sniper attack in Basra, southern Iraq, while on patrol Sunday night, the Ministry of Defense said Monday. The soldier was in stable condition at a British army field hospital where he was being treated for gunshot wounds in a leg, the British government said.

Six British soldiers were killed June 24 in the southern Shiite town of Majar al-Kabir, 290 km south of Baghdad.

Despite increasing attacks against Americans, no extra troops are needed in Iraq now, the war's retiring commander, Gen. Tommy Franks, told ABC's "Good Morning America" in an interview Monday marking his last day in uniform.

Abizaid takes over

In Florida, US Central Command officially changed leaders in a ceremony Monday, with Arabic speaker Gen. John Abizaid taking over for retiring commander Gen. Tommy Franks. Abizaid is a Lebanese-American who was one of Franks' two deputies at Central Command.

There now are some 145,000 Americans and 12,000 coalition forces including British, Poles and others in Iraq. Up to 20,000 international soldiers will flow into Iraq to help, beginning later this month and concluding the deployments at the end of September, the Pentagon has said.

In the Iraqi capital Monday, a polyglot city council met for the first time, bringing together a range of members—from tribal leaders in headaddresses to women in smart business suits. The role of the 37-member advisory body—which has no spending authority—is to advise the US-led administration.

"It's probably the most important day since April 9th, when the coalition came and liberated you from the dictatorship of Saddam Hussein," said L. Paul Bremer, the top US official in Iraq. "Today marks the resumption of the democratic system in Baghdad, which hasn't been here in 30 years."

As security men prowled the chamber with machine guns, Bremer lectured the council on the responsibilities of looking after a multiethnic city the size of Houston. He lauded their bravery.

"You have courageously chosen to serve the public at a time when malicious people in Baghdad threaten the peace and security of this city," Bremer said.

The US administration screened council members for ties to Saddam's Baath party and nullified the election of "four or five" Baathists, said Army Lt. Col. Joe Rice, a council adviser.

Iraq charter

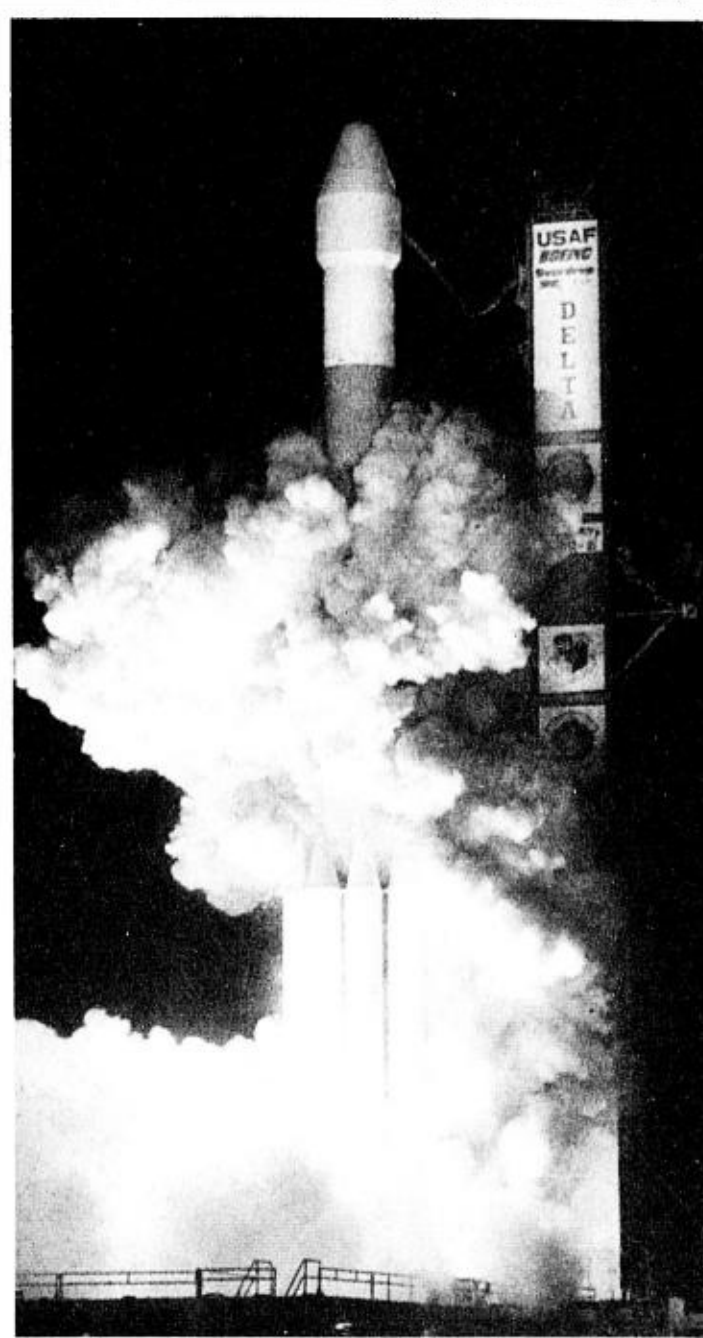
Once the country's constitution is written and a census and voter registrations finished, nationwide elections will be held, "at which point the coalition's work will be done," Bremer said.

Baghdad city council members' experience in government will lend them an edge in those elections, said Rice, a former councilman from Glendale, Colorado.

"I wouldn't underestimate their influence," he said.

The council members were not chosen through popular elections. They were selected through a show of hands among neighborhood and district council members.

AP



ON TO MARS

A Delta II Heavy launch vehicle is engulfed in smoke as it lifts off from pad 17-B July 7 at Cape Canaveral, Florida, starting the Mars Exploration Rover B on its journey to the red planet. The successful launch was the second of two from the Cape with missions to Mars for landing two identical rover robots at separate locations on the planet for exploration.

AFP

Islamic Jihad owns blast near Tel Aviv

JENIN, West Bank—A bomb blast at a house near Tel Aviv which left two people dead was carried out by a member of Islamic Jihad, a spokesperson for a local branch of the radical Palestinian group said Tuesday.

The attack on Monday night was carried out by Ahmad Yahya, a 22-year-old from a village near the West Bank town of Jenin, the spokesperson said by phone on condition of anonymity.

The attack was carried out because of the Israeli government's failure to release all Palestinian prisoners, the spokesperson added.

The Israeli cabinet voted to pave the way for the release of some 350 Palestinian prisoners at a meeting on Sunday, representing around five percent of the number of Palestinians currently in detention.

It also laid down strict criteria for the releases which effectively ruled out anyone from Islamic Jihad or another prominent hard-line group, Hamas.

Islamic Jihad and Hamas announced late last month a halt to anti-Israeli attacks for a three-month period but attached a raft of conditions to the truce, including the release of all prisoners.

Israeli police said earlier Tuesday that the explosion at a house in the village of Kfar Yabetz was most likely to have been the work of a Palestinian bomber.

Police spokesperson Gil Kleiman said that "investigators have arrived at the conclusion on the basis of all the evidence gathered that this was indeed an attack."

Kleiman added that it seemed likely that the attacker had been planning an attack on another target but the device had exploded prematurely.

AFP

115 killed as Sudan airliner crashes; child sole survivor

KHARTOUM—A total of 115 people were killed when a Sudanese airliner crashed in eastern Sudan Tuesday after reporting technical problems, leaving a 2-year-old boy as the sole survivor, official sources said.

The pilot of the Sudan Airways flight reported "technical problems" about 10 minutes after taking off Port Sudan on the Red Sea for the capital Khartoum, around 650 km to the southwest, a government spokesperson said.

He told the control tower he was trying to return to Port Sudan airport, but crashed on a strip of land near the Red Sea coast about 18 km from the airport, the spokesperson, Abdel Hamid Abdeen, said.

"It was very close to the sea," he said, adding he did not know if the pilot was trying to make an emergency landing in the water. "We cannot say what he was intending to do."

There were no casualties on the ground, he added.

Most, if not all the dead were Sudanese, Abdeen said, adding that the child who survived the crash was most probably now in a Port Sudan hospital.

Sudan Airways later released a list of passenger names and ages that showed that 33 women and

14 children, including four babies, were on the flight. The passengers also included seven non-Sudanese but the list did not give a breakdown of the nationalities.

The state-run SUNA news agency reported meanwhile from its correspondent in Port Sudan that a two-year-old boy survived the crash, but had lost a leg and was being treated in a hospital in Port Sudan.

"All the passengers except the child are dead. The concern will now be how to collect the bodies," Abdeen said, adding that 11 crew members had also died.

A technical team was now on the site of the crash investigating what happened, he added.

"They're going to release all the information they get as soon as possible," he said.

State-run Omdurman Radio, quoting another government official, reported earlier that the aircraft was a Boeing 737 and had taken off around 4 a.m.

It quoted minister of state for aviation, Mohamed Hassan al-Bahi, as saying that he would travel to Port Sudan to investigate the reasons behind the crash.

In recent years, there have been no major civil airline disasters in Sudan, but a number of military planes have crashed.

AFP

Bush lands in Africa, hopes to show US cares

DAKAR—US President George W. Bush flew to Africa on Tuesday with promises of aid and a message of hope, but his five-nation trip was likely to be overshadowed by the conflicts besetting the continent.

Bush hopes to promote his \$15 billion five-year anti-AIDS initiative, economic development and trade liberalization.

But the burning question of whether to send US troops into Liberia to keep the peace, coupled with fuel-price riots that rocked Nigeria, will bring home the realities of a continent often in turmoil.

Bush chose as his first stop Senegal, a peaceful mainly Muslim country in a region scarred by brutal wars.

He landed at Dakar's international airport, where he was greeted by President Abdoulaye Wade, on a hot, sunny morning.

Bush was accompanied by National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice and Secretary of State Colin Powell.

A large group of Senegalese officials made up a welcoming party, but strong security meant there was just a small crowd of members of the public to greet him.

Bush was likely to be discussed when Bush meets seven West African leaders.

A US spokesperson said Bush would encourage the leaders of Senegal, Cape Verde, Ghana, Mali, Niger, Sierra Leone and Gambia to keep seeking a "different pathway for their countries." He will also stress progress towards democracy and good governance.

Reuters

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Saddam's 'holy warriors' tape probably real—CIA

WASHINGTON—The CIA said Monday that an audiotape broadcast last week allegedly of Saddam Hussein calling for "holy warriors" to attack US interests, was probably authentic.

The tape, which was aired by the Arab satellite television channel Al-Jazeera, is now the first real confirmation that Saddam survived the US-led war to oust him.

"The CIA's assessment, after a technical analysis of the tape, is that it is most likely his voice," the agency said in a statement.

The tape was dated June 14, but the Central Intelligence Agency said "the exact date of the recording cannot be determined because the quality of the tape is very poor."

The purported Saddam voice in the recording said the former president and his aides were still

NEW TAPE

ANOTHER purported audiotape from Saddam taunted coalition forces late Tuesday.

The tape, the second in less than a week, was broadcast by a Lebanese television station.

The voice on the tape, which could not immediately be verified, told "Arabs, Kurds, Turks, Shiites, Sunnis, Muslims and Christians" that "your principal mission is to throw out the invaders by uniting your ranks."

in Iraq and that cells of "holy warriors" would step up their fight against coalition forces.

"I bring you the glad tidings... that the cells and brigades of jihad and sacrifice have been

formed on a large scale, comprising male and female mujahedeen (holy warriors), and launched their honorable battle against the enemy."

The speaker also exhorted Iraqis to resist the US occupation enforced after the March 20 invasion.

"I miss you, my beloved ones, although I am amidst you and within your ranks," Saddam told the Iraqi people in the tape.

Some film of Saddam was broadcast during the war, including one of him walking in the streets of Baghdad greeting ordinary Iraqis.

But his whereabouts have been a mystery since US-led forces seized Baghdad on April 9.

The United States has offered a \$25-million reward for information leading to his arrest. A similar \$15-million reward has been offered for each of his two sons, Uday and Qusai.

Nearly three months after the collapse of the regime, there are still almost daily guerrilla attacks on US troops in Iraq, blamed on former members of Saddam's Baath Party regime and Fedayeen militia fighters.

Two more US soldiers died in attacks in Baghdad. A rocket attack on a US patrol in Ramadi, west of Baghdad, left four US soldiers wounded.

One US soldier was shot dead in a gunbattle with two Iraqis, one of whom was shot dead. Another soldier was killed when a bomb hit his vehicle as he patrolled a Baghdad district.

The United States has done everything to eradicate Saddam's name from daily life. AFP



A US military security assessment team arrives by helicopter on the helipad of the American Embassy in the Liberian capital Monrovia July 7. The team of US military experts arrived in Liberia to assess whether to deploy troops as part of an intervention force that would restore order to the war-torn West African nation. AP

US experts arrive in Liberia after Taylor agrees to leave

MONROVIA—US military experts Monday arrived in Liberia to evaluate the humanitarian and security situation in the battle-scarred nation a day after President Charles Taylor agreed to go to Nigeria to end a ruinous civil war.

The small group of experts arrived in Monrovia on a reconnaissance mission as President George W. Bush—poised to leave for his first official tour of Africa—continued to mull whether to dispatch US peacekeepers to Liberia.

US Ambassador to Liberia John Blaney, who received the experts, said: "We'll take the team around to see different places where IDPs (internally displaced people) and refugees

are. We are greatly concerned by the humanitarian situation."

The team's leader Roger Coldiron said he was not in Monrovia in a military capacity, but there to "assess the security situation" and determine the humanitarian needs.

Hundreds of thousands of Liberians have in recent weeks fled fighting on the outskirts of the capital to seek refuge in the heart of Monrovia, where many are living rough, with little in the way of food and hygiene.

The American move drew a puzzled reaction from humanitarian workers on the ground.

"It's a little strange because a military team has come to evaluate humanitarian needs," Dominique Liengme from the International

Committee of the Red Cross said.

Alain Kassa, the head of the Medecins sans Frontieres (MSF, Doctors Without Borders) mission in Liberia, said the American experts would only be of use if they could ensure a "secure environment."

"If they have come to tell us what to do, as they have in some other places in the world, it's not worth the effort," he said.

But displaced Liberians sheltered near the US Embassy welcomed the Americans and called for the hasty exit of Taylor. As the first of the soldiers flew into the embassy by helicopter from neighboring Sierra Leone, the crowds around the embassy cried "Welcome USA, welcome." AFP

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Probers find 'smoking gun' in Columbia tragedy

ANTONIO, Texas—Investigators of the space shuttle Columbia disaster said Monday they had found the "smoking gun"—proof that a piece of foam insulation damaged a heat shield, causing the ship to break up on re-entry.

In a test, investigators fired a 0.75-kilo chunk of the foam at a panel taken from another shuttle's wing.

A 10.6-meter nitrogen-pressurized gun sent the suitcase-sized piece of foam hurtling into the wing panel at 800 km per hour, opening a 40-cm hole with a blast so strong that it broke one of the gauges tracking the experiment.

"We have found the smoking gun," Columbia Accident Investigation Board member Scott Hubbard said.

"This is in fact the most probable cause creating the breach that led to the accident of the Columbia, the loss of crew and vehicle."

Hubbard also said he believed repairing the damage to the wing while the shuttle orbited the Earth would have been nearly impossible.

Columbia disintegrated over the US state of Texas Feb. 1 as it was headed for landing at Cape Canaveral, Florida, after a mission to the International Space Station. All seven astronauts aboard died.

A piece of foam separated from the external fuel tank after launch and damaged the left wing of the craft.

After the foam was fired, making a hole in the wing panel, reporters and officials on hand let out an audible gasp.

"It was a visceral reaction," Hubbard said.

The damage allowed hot gases to pierce the shuttle's protective

shield during descent and ultimately caused its disintegration, according to investigators.

The board has performed six previous tests. The foam caused far less damage to the panel. However, one block of foam did crack the carbon coating while another made a crack the size of a dime where two of the panels connect.

However, Monday's test was the first convincing proof that the foam could breach the "carbon-carbon" sheeting.

"I felt surprised at how it appeared, such a dramatic punch-through," Hubbard said.

"But it is the... type of damage that must have occurred to bring down the orbiter."

Having established a cause makes it more likely that the board will be able to complete its report and to submit it to Congress by the end of July. However, whether NASA will get the shuttles flying by early next year as it hopes is still an open matter. Much depends on Congress and the White House.

The board has already recommended finding a way to repair such damage once the shuttle is in space to avoid another deadly re-entry. However, the size of the hole produced by Monday's blast means the panel will have to work harder to find a solution.

A former professor of aerospace engineering at St. Louis University said the damage to Columbia's wing could have been fairly small. If it had been large, the Columbia would have broken up even earlier.

"Once you had a crack through the leading edge, all the way through like the second test, it was going to fail," Paul Cysz, said. AFP

Bound for Hong Kong, woman lands in Melbourne

SYDNEY—Qantas Airways admitted Tuesday that its staff had failed to notice a woman who mistakenly took a plane from Los Angeles to Melbourne using a boarding pass for another airline's flight to Hong Kong.

The error wasn't detected until shortly before the absent-minded passenger landed in Melbourne on Sunday, airline officials said, blaming a faulty computerized boarding system in Los Angeles airport.

A Qantas spokesperson said the passenger was holding a boarding pass for a Cathay Pacific flight from Los Angeles to Hong Kong when she mistakenly boarded an earlier Qantas flight leaving from the

same gate for Melbourne.

"The electronic boarding pass readers which would have identified this boarding error were out of service," the spokesperson said.

Neither ground staff conducting manual boarding nor members of the aircraft cabin crew noticed that the woman was on the wrong flight, she said.

The unidentified woman simply took an empty seat in the Qantas plane and did not realize her error until shortly before landing in Melbourne, the company said.

Qantas arranged for the woman to stay in Melbourne on Sunday night and put her on a Qantas flight to Hong Kong on Monday. AFP

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 7. CALBAYOG CITY, W. SAMAR
 8. CALUBIAN, LEYTE
 9. CARIGARA, LEYTE
 10. CATBALOGAN, W. SAMAR
 11. CATARMAN, N. SAMAR
 12. LA PAZ, LEYTE
 13. LAOANG, N. SAMAR
 14. MAASIN, S. LEYTE
 15. ORAS, E. SAMAR
 16. ORMO CITY
 17. PALOMPON, LEYTE
 18. SAN JUAN, S. LEYTE
 19. SOGOD, S. LEYTE
 20. TACLOBAN CITY

- CLUSTER IX (WESTERN MINDANAO)**
1. AURORA, ZAMBOANGA DEL SUR
 2. DIPLOLOG CITY
 3. IPIL, ZAMBOANGA DEL SUR
 4. ISABELA, BASILAN
 5. JOLO, SULU
 6. LABANGAN, ZAMBOANGA DEL SUR
 7. MOLAVE, ZAMBOANGA DEL SUR
 8. PAGADIAN CITY, ZAMBOANGA DEL NORTE
 9. SINDANGAN, ZAMBOANGA DEL NORTE
 10. SIOCO, ZAMBOANGA DEL NORTE
 11. TAMBULIG, ZAMBOANGA DEL NORTE
 12. ZAMBOANGA CITY

- CLUSTER XI (SOUTHERN MINDANAO)**
1. ALABEL, SARANGANI
 2. BANSALAN, DAVAO DEL SUR
 3. BAROBO, SURIGAO DEL SUR
 4. BISLIG, SURIGAO DEL SUR
 5. CANTILLAN, SURIGAO DEL SUR
 6. DAVAO CITY, DAVAO DEL SUR
 7. GENERAL SANTOS, S. COTABATO
 8. HINATUAN, SURIGAO DEL SUR
 9. KORONADAL, S. COTABATO
 10. LIANGA, SURIGAO DEL SUR
 11. MALINTA, DAVAO DEL SUR
 12. MATI, DAVAO ORIENTAL
 13. PANOGO, DAVAO DEL NORTE
 14. POLOMOLOK, SOUTH COTABATO
 15. STO. TOMAS, DAVAO DEL NORTE
 16. SURALLAH, SOUTH COTABATO
 17. TAGO, SURIGAO DEL SUR
 18. TAGUM CITY, DAVAO DEL NORTE
 19. TANDAG, SURIGAO DEL SUR

- CLUSTER XII (CENTRAL MINDANAO)**
1. ILIGAN CITY, LANAO DEL NORTE
 2. ISULAN, SULTAN KUDARAT
 3. KABACAN, NORTH COTABATO
 4. KIDAPAWAN, NORTH COTABATO
 5. MARAWI CITY, LANAO DEL SUR

- CLUSTER XIII (NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION)**
1. MALABON
 2. MANDALUYONG CITY
 3. MANILA (MeTC) GSIS BLDG.
 4. MANILA (MeTC) MWSS BLDG.
 5. MARIKINA CITY
 6. PASAY CITY
 7. PASIG CITY (MeTC)
 8. PASIG CITY (RTC & DOJ)
 9. QUEZON CITY

The approved budget for the clusters are as follows:

	JANITORIAL	SECURITY
Cluster I	6,997,638.47	16,508,950.40
Cluster II	2,087,702.30	7,308,789.36
Cluster IV	7,392,400.07	21,225,933.80
Cluster V	4,643,839.69	10,286,405.20
Cluster VII	3,900,588.45	5,832,266.41
Cluster VIII	2,977,770.80	8,848,361.62
Cluster IX	2,410,144.78	5,632,319.26
Cluster XI	2,795,911.62	8,294,025.04
Cluster XII	1,031,140.68	2,709,174.65
Cluster XIII (NCR)	8,917,578.94	14,717,145.96
TOTAL	P43,154,715.80	P101,363,371.70

The prospective bidder's Net Financial Contracting Capacity (NFCC) based on his net working capital must at least be equal to the approved budget for the contract to be bid.

Prospective bidders shall indicate the cluster they intend to bid for. Those bidding for more than one cluster shall file separate prequalification forms/bids for each cluster.

Prospective bidders may secure pre qualification requirements from Mr. Joey V. Yabut or Ms. Levien M. Lim, Halls of Justice Secretariat, 7/F, Centennial Building, Supreme Court, Padre Faura Street, Ermita, Manila from July 10 to 22, 2003 between 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Pre-qualification requirements will be furnished the prospective bidders after payment of a non-refundable amount of P500.00 for each Cluster they intend to bid for.

I. SUBMISSION OF PREQUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

All pre-qualification requirements of prospective bidders must be personally submitted by the authorized representatives as follows:

- a. For JANITORIAL SERVICES — on 29 July 2003, 9:00 a.m. at the Old Session Hall, SC;
- b. For SECURITY SERVICES — on 30 July 2003, 9:00 a.m. at the Old Session Hall, SC.

The Committee on Halls of Justice shall evaluate the pre-qualification requirements on the respective scheduled dates of submission.

II. PRE-BID CONFERENCE

The pre-bid conference for JANITORIAL and SECURITY services shall be on 13 August 2003, at 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m., respectively at the Old Session Hall, SC.

III. OPENING OF BIDS

Only bids of pre-qualified bidders for janitorial and security services who participated in the pre-bid conference will be accepted and opened in the presence of the bidders or their authorized representatives:

- a. For JANITORIAL SERVICES — on 1 September 2003, at 1:30 p.m. at the Old Session Hall, SC;
- b. For SECURITY SERVICES — on 2 September 2003 at 1:30 p.m. at the Old Session Hall, SC.

The Supreme Court reserves the right to reject any or all bids or offers which it may consider to be disadvantageous and not beneficial to the Court or waive any defect or informality therein.

8 July 2003

(Sgd.) VIRGINIA ANCHETA-SORIANO
Working Chairperson
Committee on Halls of Justice

(PDI - July 9 & 16, 2003)

Across the NATION

Assistant Editor Tony Bergonia

Slay try on mayor linked to land row

By Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

STA. ROSA, Laguna—Two days after the frustrated attempt on his life, Mayor Leon Arcillas admitted that "the squabble between the squatters and legal owners" of a parcel of land in Barangay Pulong Sta. Cruz might have something to do with the foiled ambush.

Still recuperating inside his room in Perpetual Help Medical Center in Biñan, Arcillas said the demolition that evicted hundreds of residents in a five-hectare lot in front of the Coca-Cola plant and another pending demolition, could have infuriated some squatters.

However, he denied having a hand in the demolitions. "It is clear that I don't have anything to do with the demolition. It was instructed by a court order. Some residents are blaming me because they want me to intercede. But we should comply with the law," Arcillas said.

Residents are also protesting the imminent demolition in the barangay roadside. The eviction of squatters is part of a road-widening project of the Department of Public Works and Highways.

"Residents should have questioned the DPWH and not the local government. We have nothing to do with that project," he said.

Arcillas, together with his driver, a bodyguard and his secretary, were on board a maroon Isuzu highlander when they were ambushed. He had just come from the Amihan Subdivision in Barangay Tagapo.

As their vehicle exited the subdivision, a lone gunman shot the mayor who was seated at the back-seat.

He was hit by a single bullet on his right thigh. The suspects quickly boarded a Yamaha Enduro motorcy-

cle and fled towards the town proper.

Motives

Laguna police director Senior Supt. Edwin Corvera said they are looking into all possible angles behind the ambush. He said they are also looking into political motives and even a love angle between the mayor and an alleged lover.

But he reiterated that the political angle is the least probable cause of the ambush, as he said "Arcillas has no known political rival in the town."

Arcillas, the president of the League of Mayors in Laguna, is on his second term and has already signified intentions to run for a third term next year.

Corvera added that the police are also seriously looking into the land dispute as a possible reason of the frustrated murder. He said the suspect is not a professional assassin as evidenced by his failure to hit the target fatally.

Denial

Despite Arcilla's pronouncement, residents of the disputed land brushed off allegations that they have responsibility over the failed killing.

Pilside Neighborhood Association president Francisco Ramos said they would never do such a wicked act. He said they may have adverse feelings towards their mayor, but they never

thought of doing such a thing. "We don't even have enough money to buy food, why would we hire a killer? We are not evil. All we want is justice. We will never do that to him," he said in Filipino.

However, Ramos claimed that Arcillas has a vested interest in the proposed conversion of their lot into an industrial zone. He said massive land conversions and demolitions took place in the town since Arcillas became mayor in 1998.

He said residents inside the lot are not squatters. Their grandparents have lived in the area since 1914. They were surprised when counsels of the Andasol, and later Promenade Corp., presented them a court order to vacate the lot.

Ramos said the land developer insisted that they owned the lot. He said nobody from the local government was present when the demolition happened in Oct. 22, 2002 which displaced over 200 families.

Ramos added that the developer never gave the residents any relocation site. The displaced families are now living in makeshift shanties inside the barangay's basketball court.

Even barangay captain Constanca Dones belied reports that residents affected by the demolition are responsible for the incident. She said people in the area are "very peace-loving."

As Arcillas noted, another demolition is in the offing pending a resolution from the Presidential Commission on Urban Poor (PCUP). The demolition and clearing operations of the DPWH in the barangay roadside, scheduled late last month, also received criticisms even from government agencies.

DUMANQUILLAS BAY

Red tide kills thousands of fish

PAGADIAN CITY—Thousands of fish have been found floating since late last month due to high-density level of red tide toxic organism that spread out to Dumanquillas Bay that covers two provinces in Western Mindanao.

Millions of pesos worth of marine products have been lost while around 10,000 residents have been deprived of a source of income, according to the local red tide monitoring task force in Zamboanga del Sur.

Jamil Saral, red tide task force head in the province, said seawater sample analysis collected from the coastal areas of Margosatubig, Lapuyan and Kumalarang towns in Zamboanga del Sur and in Buug, Zamboanga Sibugay province showed a very high density level of red tide toxic organism, otherwise known as *pyrodinium bahamense* variety *compressum*.

The cell densities ranging from 141 to 11,318 per liter of seawater,

which is beyond the tolerable level of plankton formation density, Saral said.

Saral said a large path of reddish-brown-like seawater discoloration was found in the coastal lines of Barangays Lenok Madalum and Bayulan in Lapuyan town.

Saral said although no human casualty has been reported, it was still the "worst in previous years."

From 1994 to 2000, 177 individuals were affected by the red tide phenomenon in Zamboanga del Sur. Of the 177 hospitalized, 11 died.

Saral said while his team was collecting water samples in the affected areas, "we found some 5,000 kilos of various species of fish floating lifeless and on the stage of decomposition."

Because of the sudden and rapid bloom of toxic red tide organism in Dumanquillas Bay, he warned, the public as well as fishers "not to eat all types of shellfish."

Also heavily affected are two aquaculture farms in Maruing, Lapuyan town operated by Emeliano Oculam and Victor Adelton. Some 15,000 milkfish and 500 *siganid* (Kitong) have died after "taking in tidal water" from the bay during high tide, he said.

Also affected are the seaweed farms in Maruing, Lapuyan town and in Bualan, Kumalarang town. These areas are known producers and suppliers of seaweeds.

The red task force monitoring team in the province has recommended that aqua marine cultivators must harvest their stocks to save their remaining fish and seaweeds from further destruction.

They also urged residents, especially those living near the coastlines of Dumanquillas Bay that straddles Zamboanga del Sur and Zamboanga Sibugay provinces, to refrain from gathering, selling, transporting and eating of shellfish. *Hernan de la Cruz, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Italian priest to meet Maneros

KIDAPAWAN CITY—Italian priest Peter Geremia yesterday said he was willing to meet the Manero brothers, who were reportedly wanting to see him.

It was not immediately known why Idelberto and Elpidio, who were recently released after serving their prison terms in connection with the murder of Fr. Tulio Favali in 1985, wanted to pay Geremia a visit.

The Maneros, along with their brother Norberto, waylaid Favali in Barangay La Esperanza in Tulunan, North Cotabato on April 11 of that year thinking he was Geremia.

"They said they wanted to visit us here and we are waiting for them," Geremia said.

The Italian priest, known for his struggle in defense of the indigenous communities of Central Mindanao, said he has no objection to the release of the Maneros.

"If the release was intended to give the Maneros (a chance) to live normal lives again, that is something that the Church will be thankful for," he said.

But he cautioned the duo against allowing politicians to use them again "because it will have a great effect on the public."

While he was looking forward to the day he meets with those who once tried to kill him, Geremia also aired concern about the safety of the Favali witnesses.

"What we don't want is that the Favali witnesses will be threatened," he said.

In the 1970s, the Maneros became notorious by leading the anti-Muslim vigilante group known as the Ilaga (rat).

Although they allegedly executed civilians including Christians, they continued to be free because of their politician-patrons and the military's protection.

With the waning Moro rebellion in the '80s, the military and some politicians continued to tap them by integrating them into a paramilitary group then known as the Civilian Home Defense Force (CHDF).

It was during their CHDF days that they murdered Favali.

Idelberto, Elpidio and Norberto were arrested and were sentenced to life imprisonment.

In 1998, President Fidel Ramos commuted their sentence to a maximum of 23 years and a minimum prison term of 18 years.

Gen. Dionisio Santiago, director of the New Bilibid Prisons, said Idelberto and Elpidio completed their sentence on June 23.

"We have what we call good conduct time allowance . . . in effect, the good conduct time allowance was also served by them," he said.

Norberto remains at the Bilibid prisons under the reception and diagnostic center, Santiago said. He would be released on Feb. 21, 2015 yet.

Jeffrey Tupas, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Countdown for justice



WAPILE

IT IS exactly 422 days today since Pagadian journalist Edgar Damalero was slain in cold blood. The principal suspect, police officer Guillermo Wapile, remains at large after escaping while in the custody of the police.

Ex-stude tagged Bicol's most wanted criminal

By Ronnie Lorejo
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

LEGAZIPI CITY—A former Electronic Computer Engineering student of the AMA Computer University based in this city was declared the most wanted criminal by Bicol police after he was identified with the gruesome killings of five persons in Albay province.

Jessie Ray Otañez, alias 'Michael Sarmiento,' 21, together with his mother Evelyn Angeles Otañez of Bagumbayan, Ligao City, were identified by Albay police chief Senior Supt. Pedro Tango as the main suspect in the killing of a nurse Ma. Isabel Juarez at St. Joseph Medical Clinic in Barangay Guildid, Ligao City on March 3.

In a press conference at the Albay Hotel on Saturday, Tango disclosed that new pieces of evidence



OTANEZ

also pointed to Otañez as the prime suspect in the killings of beauty parlor staffs Marilyn Jentalan and Agnes Bagalay in March 7 in this city, and Australian couple Augustus and Corazon Kuhle in Sept. 14, 2002 in their residence at Kyama Building in Barangay Bonot.

Tango said investigators discovered this connection after putting together clues such as Corazon Kuhle's diary and stolen computer equipment, pawn tickets for Juarez's stolen Nokia 8250 mobile phone and jewelry, witnesses' testimonies and the alleged murder weapon—a snub-nosed home-made caliber 38 revolver.

Police said the last entry on Kuhle's diary indicates that a certain Michael Sarmiento was supposed to visit the Kuhle couple in their home the day she and her husband were murdered.

Corazon's relatives told police that Sarmiento was negotiating the sale of the couple's house on behalf of his London-based relative.

Six months after the Kuhles' murders, the name Michael Sarmiento surfaced again on Cebuana Lhuiller pawn tickets for Juarez's stolen jewelry (pawned March 3). Police said, Otañez used this alias in pawning the items.

From a photo gallery, a witness who requested anonymity positively identified Otañez as the one who came out of the Kyama Building the day the Kuhle couple was murdered.

"He flagged down a tricycle and carried with him several boxes and computer accessories," said the witness.

They likewise revealed that the suspect once bragged about having shot and killed two women who refused to dance with him inside a beauty parlor.

"He even showed us his gun to prove it," claimed one of them.

Police found his gun, a home-made cal. 38 revolver, a computer motherboard, and computer power supply stashed in a garbage pile

in front of the suspect's rented boarding house last March 31.

Ballistic examination results confirmed that the slugs recovered from the heads of Corazon Kuhle and Jentalan were all fired from the recovered gun.

Police found Otañez's boarding house filled with demonic signs, anti-Christ and anti-Church slogans.

Members of the Volunteers Against Crime and Corruption (VACC) also found the Nazi swastika and communist hammer-and-sickle symbols drawn on the walls.

Evelyn Otañez, and Jesse Ray had been charged criminally in court for Juarez' murder. A warrant of arrest had been issued by Judge Pedro Sorio of the Regional Trial Court (RTC) branch 13 in Ligao City on June 27.

Other murder cases have also been lodged against Jesse Ray,

while another warrant of arrest had been issued against him by Judge Romeo Danas of RTC Branch 1 in this city on July 1.

The suspect was found to be the nephew of former deputy Bicol police chief, retired Senior Supt. Jose Angeles Jr.

Tango said the retired police official himself vowed to facilitate his nephew's surrender should he spot him.

But Roberto Padilla, brother of slain Corazon Kuhle, and Ma. Luisa Enciso, sister of Juarez, doubt the suspect's uncle "I heard Colonel Angeles in a radio interview before saying, he would certainly bring out his nephew. But where are they now? Besides, the mother is the retired police colonel's sister! I don't think he wouldn't care!" Padilla lamented. Enciso challenged the family to surface.

Soldier, cop exec probed for aiding British fugitive

By Suzzane B. Salva
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—The National Bureau of Investigation in Central Visayas (NBI-7) is investigating nine persons, including a military soldier, a police officer and two Immigration officers, over allegations that they helped British George Steen while he was still in hiding in Cebu.

After defrauding many Britons of millions of pounds, Steen left his country and hid in the Philippines in mid-1997 and has been a fugitive until his arrest here last June 19.

Steen, who was convicted by the Crown Court in Southwark, United Kingdom on June 23 for conspiracy to commit fraud, was deported to the UK on June 26.

NBI Acting Regional Director Reynaldo Esmeralda told the INQUIRER that prior to Steen's deportation, the Briton executed a statement identifying nine persons who helped him launder his money and hide from authorities while he was in Cebu.

"These people facilitated his banking transactions while some kept him away from the local authorities," Esmeralda said.

The Briton, according to the NBI, had not only acquired about P40 million worth of properties in at least two posh subdivisions in Metro Cebu but has also kept huge amounts of bank deposits.

Esmeralda refused to disclose the names of the individuals who aided Steen but he said one is a major of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, another is a police colonel while two are from the Bureau of Immigration.

He said these individuals would be summoned to the office to shed light on their connection with Steen.

A day before Steen was deported back to his country, NBI agents searched Steen's hotel room at Sarosa Hotel in Mabolo, Cebu City and found cash amounting to \$93,450, seven bank books from Allied Bank, 14 platinum credit cards, computer files, 60 gigabytes in his laptop's external drive, books on taxation and other laws in the Philippines.

Esmeralda said that shortly after his arrest, Steen even tried to bribe his captors. Esmeralda said he was told by one of his agents that Steen offered to give "millions of pesos" in exchange for his release.

The Briton, Esmeralda said, also told the NBI shortly after his arrest that he had authorized the withdrawal of P10 million that he said would be offered for his release.

Steen, he added, also identified four individuals to whom he entrusted P50 million.

Fil-Am linked to fraud cases in US nabbed

ANGELES CITY—Agents of the United States' Federal Bureau of Investigation and local police and immigration officials have arrested a Filipino-American facing charges of fraud before the Western District Court of Wisconsin.

Supt. Eliseo Cruz, chief of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Team in Pampanga, said Renato Turla, a former US Navy personnel, was arrested in his house in Barangay Balibago last week.

Cruz said the team of FBI special agent Mark Sicko coordinated with the Pampanga CIDT to find Turla, based on the bureau's information that the suspect had been hiding in this city.

Cruz said they monitored the suspect's activities until the FBI team arrived on July 2 to arrest him.

The FBI team, along with personnel of the Bureau of Immigration, took Turla to Manila on the same date. It was learned that Turla was deported to the US a day after his arrest.

Cruz said Turla is facing 13 counts of "devising a scheme" to defraud and obtain money from the Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Uniformed Services Program in the US.

He said Turla is also wanted for two counts of filing false, fictitious and fraudulent claims in the same program. The US Western District Court of Wisconsin had issued a warrant for his arrest.

Jun Malig, PDI Central Luzon Desk

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INQUIRER *Northern Luzon*

Editor Jun Bandayrel
Bureau Chief Rolando B. Fernandez

RETURN OF THE MUMMIES

Kabayan's lost civilization

By Frank Cimat
Baguio City

THE DISCOVERY of four mummies in the house of the late Bontoc politician Alfredo Lam-en has brought back the limelight on the ancient town of Kabayan in Benguet and exhumed the mystique behind its lost "civilization."

Many anthropologists have asked the same question that the modern Kabayan people have been asking themselves: How can our ancestors practice mummification while the other indigenous groups in the Cordillera or even the whole country did not?

Anthropologist Isikias Picpican, curator of the Saint Louis University Museum in Baguio City, came out with a book on the Kabayan mummies, which said that the "mummifiers" might have belonged to a lost tribe.

In his book, Picpican identified one of the oldest settled communities in Benguet as Imbosi. Today, that patch of land in Kabayan has rice paddies and vegetable gardens. Only the *apesang* or the split-rock formation has made it distinct.

"Kabayan historians refer to Imbosi as one of the oldest and the earliest remembered settled community around the 16th century," Picpican said. "The Galvey expedition in the early 19th Century (circa 1829) found Imbosi in the headwaters of the Agno River as one of the oldest settlements and a thriving community. However, German travelers to the Cordillera (who) passed by the Agno River in the 1850s to the 1880s did not mention Imbosi as a settled community."

Pioneers of Imbosi

Picpican said the fabled hunters of old, like Baglao and Gaddate, were the pioneers of Imbosi. Residents of Imbosi, according to the old stories, always held *peshit* (feasts) and slaves (*bagaen*) were bartered and sold. Several Kabayan stories still allude to the Imbosi of old.

Imbosi was also known for tattooing. Apo Anno, another fabled hunter whose mummy's return from the National Museum to its present cave at Nabalicong in Buguias, Benguet, set off a series of *peshit* in 1999, had elaborate tattoos.

Basing on the mummies' tattoos, Imbosi residents then might have developed tattooing on their own or a trans-

sient tattoo artist from Bontoc might have popularized it there, Picpican said.

But with the banishment of Imbosi, tattooing in Benguet has disappeared, he said.

"Mummification in Kabayan might not have been the product of a long trial and error process," Picpican said. "But it was a deliberate attempt to preserve the body."

Apo Anno's body was probably the first Imbosi resident to be mummified; his mummification carried upon the divine guidance of his mother, Cuyapon, a mountain spirit.

Picpican said that because Imbosi was a trading center then, many *baknang* or rich people were able to afford the *peshit* and the mummification process that followed.

The body to be mummified was set on a *sangadil* (or *sangachil*) or death chair and the body was smoked for days.

Some respected elders in the Cordillera are still placed on a *sangadil*.

Picpican clarified that this is not the actual mummification process but just one of the series of processes.

He said it was possible that the process began even before death, where the sick and dying were given a grain-free diet for three years similar to the Buddhist Japanese preservation.

Picpican said the *sabeng* or fermented *camote* was a Benguet staple and could have helped in the preservation of the body.

Tobacco juice was poured on the body and tobacco smoke blown in probably to stop worms from coming in. A decoction from the leaves of the *patani* or lima bean was applied on the skin. Salt, a precious commodity in the Cordillera, might also have been used to dry the skin.

The mummies were placed in wood coffins and placed in caves for burial. Cave burials were for the rich as the common people were buried underground.

Kabayan mummies were not particular to the Imbosi or even the Kabayan Ibalois as other Cordillera communities practiced cave burial.

Picpican said those buried in the summit of Mt. Timbac were probably the Imbosi pioneers.

As to why Imbosi as a community died, Picpican gave several theories. It could be that Imbosi was flooded during a strong typhoon and the Agno River swelled and eroded their houses.

Picpican said numerous *busol* (head-hunter) raids forced the Imbosis to settle in other places or go their own ways. He



THE CELEBRATED mummy of Apo Anno was returned to its burial cave in Buguias, Benguet, in 1999.

POI PHOTO

also said that epidemics from *kulida* (cholera) or *kultong* (chickenpox) might have been the culprit.

The most famous theory, as related by the elders to Picpican, may be a simple morality tale.

The poor of Imbosi were tired of being ordered upon by the rich that they simply left them and the *baknang*

found out they could not live as a community by themselves.

Picpican cited the last *peshit* in Imbosi when the rich decided to prepare the feast themselves. Lard was used to fuel the fire and the feet of the cattle were used as tripod for the pots. It became a cause of great shame and embarrassment that the *baknang* decided to leave Imbosi.

Searching for Lady of Piat's ivory image

CHURCH officials and religious workers in Cagayan have started to revive interest on the search for the original ivory image of the Our Lady of Piat.

Rev. Fr. Eladio Nera of the University of Santo Tomas, in a lecture last month, said the missing ivory image, which has a lighter skin tone, was a replacement for the original dark-skinned image done in papier mâché almost 400 years ago.

Nera said the original image was created by a sculptor in Portuguese Macao in early 1600.

He said historical documents showed that the image was taken in 1604 to Piat, which was then under the old Diocese of Nueva Segovia, to pacify the natives who had killed Spanish settlers in the town.

He said there were "confusing" reasons offered on the dark skin tone of the image. Among them were the materials used in the image and the sculptor's desire for the image to look like the dark-skinned Ibanag.

Nera cited accounts revealing that a missionary in Piat took the image to Tuguegarao to have it copied in ivory. The missionary brought the new image to the town, thinking that the natives would like one that had lighter skin, he said.

However, the missionary was forced to return the original image when the natives rejected the new image cast in ivory.

Accounts said no one knew where the ivory image was taken.

Nera's lecture on the history of the image has prompted church officials to form a research committee to establish the circumstances behind the disappearance of the ivory image and to find it.

The committee was also tasked with confirming how the image was taken to Piat through the Cagayan River.

Church officials said establishing the route from Aparri to Piat and the type of vessel that ferried the image was part of their preparations for next year's celebration of the quadricentennial of the arrival of the Our Lady of Piat in Cagayan.

Estanislao Caldez

Why more and more farmers are leaving Mother Earth

By Maurice Malanes
La Trinidad, Benguet

MORE and more Filipinos are getting out of touch with Mother Earth as they leave the farms in favor of livelihood in the cities or overseas.

Out of five Filipino farmers, only one would remain to till the land, Erlinda Pearl Armada, Department of Agrarian Reform director in the Cordillera, said, citing studies.

The phenomenon is true not only in the vast tracts of farmland in the lowlands, but also in the small rice terraces of the Cordillera.

In Ifugao, for example, only the very old or those who married early get to stay to work on the rice terraces, Gov. Teodoro Baguilat Jr. said.

In Benguet, which produces 80 percent of the country's tropical vegetables, more and more children of farmers would like to be nurses so they could work overseas, noted Gov. Raul Molintas.

That more and more farmers are leaving the farms has alerted the DAR, which is primarily mandated to distribute land to the landless, to do something about the exodus of farmers from the provinces.

"We may succeed in our agrarian reform, but the problem now and in the near future is who are going to till the land?" Armada told participants in the recent launching of the Kapit-Bisig Laban sa Kahirapan (Kalahi), a government poverty-alleviation pro-



IFUGAO youths are leaving the rice terraces for jobs elsewhere.

BEN MOSES EBREO

gram, in La Trinidad, Benguet.

Armada thus bared the need for government support systems to help raise the income of farmers in the provinces so they wouldn't have to seek jobs elsewhere.

Through Kalahi, the DAR seeks to help establish industries in rural farming communities through cooperatives, she said.

Deogracious Almora, Benguet agrarian reform officer, also said his office would help set up a farmers' center to help sustain earlier training of farmers on organic farming, for example, which DAR has been coordinating with the Shell Foundation since last year.

The center, he said, would be complete with a library of farm technology literature and documentation of the best practices of farmers, who have applied what they learned from training courses given.

Declining interest

Concerned about the declining interest of young people to enroll in agriculture and related courses, the DAR also embarked on what it called the President Diosdado Macapagal agrarian scholarship program.

The program, which began this school year, has 1,500 recipients nationwide, 35 of them from the Cordillera.

The scholars from poor families have high hopes and ideals about what they can do to help their communities after they graduate four to five years from now.

"I intend to go back to my community and help my village mates raise more food," said Arelene Labnisen, 17, of Kibungan, Benguet, who is taking agriculture at the Benguet State University (BSU).

Russel Butag, 18, another scholar taking agriculture at BSU, also wishes to return to his native town of Buguias, the country's commercial vegetable salad bowl, to possibly introduce earth-friendly alternatives to the prevalent chemical-dependent

farming system there.

"Our soil there is already tired, if not dead or dying, because of too much chemicals," he said.

Labnisen and Butag are among eight DAR scholars from Benguet who all vowed to return to their communities and help raise food and incomes of their village mates.

But the likes of Labnisen and Butag are definitely rare as the BSU College of Agriculture reported a decline in enrollment in recent years.

Freshman enrollees this school year in the College of Agriculture are more than 300, but they did not even reach the 350 quota, said Dean Julia Solimen said.

"Enrollees in agriculture have steadily declined in recent years unlike in education and nursing," she said.

Ever since it opened up a nursing course in 1990, the BSU has to increase enrollment in its College of Nursing each school year.

The unit now has 494 enrollees, 147 of them freshmen. But more than 1,600 students have applied for admission this school year, an increase on the 1,500 applicants last year.

Challenge

At the Saint Louis University (SLU) in Baguio City, more than 4,000 students had taken the entrance test for admission into the SLU College of Nursing this school year, but only 800 could be admitted, said Dean Mary Grace Lacanaria.

From 22 nursing schools in 1996-97, the Ilocos and Cordillera now have 35 nursing schools, Lacanaria said.

The DAR scholarship may yet

help encourage young people to pursue careers in agriculture and other agriculture-related courses, such as agribusiness and agronomy or farm management.

But aside from scholarships, the agriculture courses in the country may need some rethinking.

"The challenge is how to encourage more young people to enroll in agriculture by ensuring that they are gainfully employed after they graduate," said Solimen. "They should also be given the opportunity and training for possible self-employment after graduation."

"This means instituting reforms in our College of Agriculture curriculums," she said. "For example, we can give our agriculture students the option to specialize in bee-keeping rather than offering them a general curriculum on entomology (study of insects)."

Another challenge for both farmers and agriculture students is for them to learn the art of "production programming" in agriculture, said Molintas.

Unlike the "hit-or-miss" production approach of most farmers, production programming entails a farming method where farmers regularly cultivate a certain volume of top-quality crops in a certain period based on a scientific survey of market demands.

Production programming and "going back to the basics of original farming as taught by our ancestors may yet be our hope for global competitiveness" once the World Trade Organization agreements are enforced in 2005, said Molintas.

LRT bomber pleads guilty

From page A1

murder and multiple attempted murder filed against him. The accused was flanked by two police escorts armed with M-16 rifles.

"I have already admitted to everything in my sworn statement," Yunos was overheard telling his interpreter in Maranao, his native dialect. During the preliminary investigation, Yunos said he was ready to face execution.

Lawyer Aida Dizon, whom the court appointed as Yunos' counsel, could only shake her head after the accused pleaded guilty to all the charges.

"It's really how he wanted it even after I explained the situation to him three times," Dizon told reporters.

Case bolstered

State Prosecutor Peter L. Ong said the guilty plea of Yunos strengthened the prosecution case not only against Yunos himself but all his co-accused.

"The act of one is the act of all. They will all be penalized in the same manner," Ong said.

"But he (Yunos) is also going down," Ong said, noting that at least three survivors of the bloody attack—a mother and her two children—had already positively identified Yunos.

"They saw him get off the train minutes before it exploded," he said.

Elfred Meneses Jr., NBI anti-fraud and computer crimes chief, acknowledged Yunos may not have known his co-accused by their real names but said he knew them by their aliases.

Even so, Meneses said "Muklis' admission of his guilt bolsters our case against him."

Yunos and two others had been charged in absentia before his arrest in May in Cagayan de Oro City as he was about to board a plane for Manila.

On Monday, the justice department filed similar charges in the Manila Regional Trial Court against eight other suspected terrorists in connection with the LRT bombing. The department is still collecting evidence against the suspects in connection with four other bombings on Dec. 30, 2000.

Charged in court were Hambali, born Riduan Isamuddin, an Indonesian; Abubakar Bafana Faiz, a Malaysian; and Fathur Roman al-Ghozi, an Indonesian.

The three are considered the top leaders of Jemaah Islamiah.

Of the three foreigners, only Al-Ghozi will go on trial. He will be arraigned on July 21, Ong said. Al-Ghozi is already serving a 12-year prison term in the Philippines, having been convicted of illegal possession of explosives. Hambali is still at large, while Faiz is detained in Singapore.

Prosecutors said Hambali and Faiz with Al-Ghozi, Yunos, and several others, met in Metro Manila a week before the LRT bombing. Hambali and Faiz allegedly gave Yunos P280,000 between November and December 2000 to finance the attack.

Also charged was Alim Pangalian Solaiman, alleged head of a special unit of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front. He allegedly sent Yunos to carry out the bombings in Metro Manila.

The MILF, which has been engaged in on-and-off talks with the Philippine government, has denied any links with terrorist groups.

Even so, four other alleged MILF members—Zainal Paks, Salman Moro, Ustad Said and Mohomad Amiror—were also indicted for either helping plot the bombings or procuring the explosives. The new set of suspects were implicated by Yunos and Al-Ghozi, who were arrested on Jan. 15, 2002.

According to prosecutors, Yunos allegedly prepared the bombs' wiring while Al-Ghozi reportedly admitted preparing the switch on the alarm-clock triggers and packing the explosives.

Hambali is suspected of being the former operations chief of Jemaah Islamiah and Bin Laden's point man in Southeast Asia. Faiz is believed to have once led the group's branch in Malaysia.

Antiterrorism officials across Southeast Asia say Jemaah Islamiah aims to establish a Muslim extremist stronghold in the region and blame the group for last year's Bali bombings that killed 202 people, and for alleged plots to attack Western and Israeli targets in Singapore, Indonesia and the Philippines.

Philippine intelligence officials say the collusion between Jemaah Islamiah and the MILF in carrying out the Manila bombings proves that the Moro rebels have had links with foreign terrorists. *With reports by AP, AFP and Reuters*

Iraq closes embassy in Manila

THE IRAQI embassy in the Philippines has closed down after US-led coalition forces ordered the remaining Iraqi diplomats to suspend operations, diplomatic sources said on Tuesday.

Four Iraqi diplomats now based in Manila were due to leave the country and return to Baghdad, the sources said, following orders from the US-led Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) which wanted all officials who served under Saddam Hussein recalled.

"CPA authorities want to cut all ties of Saddam Hussein with Iraqi diplomatic missions and later on re-open under a new leadership," a ranking official of the Department of Foreign Affairs told reporters.

Officials said they have not received any request for asylum from the Iraqi envoys.

Earlier this year, the Philippines, one of the staunchest US allies in the region in Washington's fight against terror, ordered three Iraqi diplomats to leave the country on suspicion of espionage and alleged links to Muslim rebels blamed for bombings in the country's south. *Reuters*

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HAYAANG DUMALOG ANG DIARRHEA,

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Tunay na malaking problema ang magka-diarrhea ang inyong anak. Ngunit kontra sa paniniwala ng karamihan, ang diarrhea ay hindi isang sakit na kailangan gamutin. Sa katunayan, mahalaga ang diarrhea sa paglilinis ng digestive system (tiyan at bituka) ng inyong anak.

Ito ay natural na depensa ng kanyang katawan. Ito ang paraan ng bituka sa pag-alis ng mga nakakalason o nakakasamang bagay sa loob nito. Katulad ito ng pag-ubog para matanggal ang plema sa daanan ng hangin (airways).

Ang payo ng mga doktor ay hayaan tumuloy ang diarrhea upang matanggal ang nagdudulot nito. Hanggang pinipigil ang diarrhea, hindi malilinis ang digestive system at magtutuloy-tuloy ang sakit. Ang dapat gawin ay iwasan ang mga komplikasyong maaring magresulta dahil sa diarrhea.

Dehydration ang Tunay na Panganib.

Kasama sa diarrhea ang pagkawala ng tubig at electrolytes sa katawan. Ito ang tunay na panganib, ang DEHYDRATION.

Ang tubig at electrolytes ay mga importanteng sangkap-buhay na kailangan sa maayos na pagtakbo ng puso at bato. Komplikasyon ang resulta kapag nagkulang ang katawan sa mga ito.

Pananamlay at panunuyo ng labi ang mga unang palatandaan (symptoms). Kapag hindi ito naagapan, tutuloy ito sa komplikasyon sa puso at bato. Kapag ganito na kaseryoso, sa ospital na dadalhin ang inyong anak sa halip na sa banyo.

Hindi Sapat Ang Tubig o Am

Ang nakasanayang ibigay sa bata kapag siya'y may diarrhea ay tubig at am (rice water). Ang hindi alam ng maraming mga magulang ay kulang ito sa paglaban sa dehydration. Hindi nito maibabalik ang kinakailangang electrolytes na nawala sa katawan ng bata.

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Lakas bets for '04 out by July 21

From page A1

He said that if Cojuangco would be chosen the standard-bearer by the united opposition, he would extend his support.

But he is ready to meet Cojuangco head-on if the latter runs under the banner of the administration, he said, adding that the opposition "must choose."

Commenting on President Macapagal-Arroyo's repeated statements that she would not run in 2004, Ramos said these should be taken at face value at this time. He related his experience in 1992, and defended his decision to run as an independent candidate despite promising to abide by the Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino's choice of Ramon Mitra as standard-bearer.

"This is not being disrespectful of the so-called *palabra de honor* (word of honor)," he said. "I got out of LDP when I lost [the nomination]."

Ramos also said those who had declared interest in being the Lakas standard-bearer—like former Sen. Raul Roco and Sen. Ramon Magsaysay Jr.—would not automatically be on the list of candidates.

"It doesn't mean that the one who makes the most noise is most capable," he said.

He added that he was not available for 2004 but was seriously considering running in 2010, when all constitutional issues shall have been resolved.

"I will still be around then, but I don't know about you," Ramos said.

'My time is 2004'

Lacson told reporters after the forum that he was not willing to slide down and be anyone's running mate.

He said he wanted to make a go for the presidency next year "because my time is in 2004, and 2010 is no longer my time."

At the forum, the senator said he spoke with Cojuangco in February or March and offered to give way should the latter decide to seek the presidency.

He said he wanted to know Cojuangco's political plans now because at that time, so many people were getting involved in his own plans.

"[Cojuangco] told me to go ahead with my plans as he was satisfied with what he was doing [as chair of] San Miguel [Corp.]. He was not interested," Lacson said.

To this day, Lacson said, he was still "banking on our agreement."

If Cojuangco changes his mind, that is his prerogative, Lacson said.

But he stressed that his earlier offer to give way to Cojuangco "doesn't stand anymore."

"You know, if you're wading in the water and you get to the middle, and the one you spoke with said you should go back to shore, that would be difficult to do," Lacson told reporters in Filipino. "It's unfair, not difficult but unfair."

Asked whether the opposition would unite for 2004, Lacson said he hoped so.

Reminded that Sen. Edgardo Angara, LDP president, was pushing for a Cojuangco presidency, Lacson stressed that Angara was "not the opposition, not LDP."

He conceded that Angara was not supporting him because the latter "doesn't like some people around me." He named businessman Manuel Zamora and his brother, San Juan Rep. Ronaldo Zamora, as examples.

He also said he was adopted by the Partido ng Masang Pilipino as its standard-bearer.

Unhappy

At the forum, Lacson said that he still hated politics and that he was "not happy" at the Senate.

He said he would rather be in an executive position than in legislation.

Lacson also said the President was a "failure."

"We've tasted almost three years of her [administration]," he said. "I think she is a failure. Where are we today?"

Stressing his point, he said the budget deficit had ballooned from over P100 billion three years ago to P213 billion at present, while the peso against the dollar had fallen from P44 to P53.

He also said the number of kidnapping-for-ransom cases and bank robberies had risen.

Asked whether Joseph Estrada would be an asset or a liability to his political plans, Lacson said the ousted President would be both.

"Politics is addition. Any endorsement from a political figure would help in my candidacy," he said.

Selection procedure

Ramos said the timetable for the selection of candidates was finalized two weeks ago.

He said the list of probable standard bearers would be submitted to the Lakas executive committee, which includes the President. Vice President Teofisto Guingona, Speaker Jose de Venecia and himself. After making its choice, Lakas will then consult with Cojuangco's NPC.

nors were not invited and not any one of them attended the occasion which was strictly a Nationalist People's Coalition gathering," he said.

He also said that while Cojuangco was supposed to have consulted with the business sector, Church leaders and civic and people's organizations, no such meeting was held.

"Danding Cojuangco was obviously maneuvered by Ernesto, Maceda and Noli Fuentebella to consume all his time (in) a strictly NPC gathering," Villafuerte said.

People's decision

According to Verceles, political leaders do not decide the fate of presidential aspirants; only the people do.

"Though an extensive political network is a big thing ... it's not as influential as the peoples' decision during elections."

He said it was too early to make political commitments, and noted that a lot of factors might still come into play.

The Catanduanes governor admitted that Raul Roco, a Bicolano who enjoyed solid support from the region in his 1998 bid, still headed the list of preferred candidates in his province, "And of course President GMA," he added.

Villafuerte said Lee had told him that "it is premature to express support to a purported presidential aspirant who himself has not firmly declared an intention to run for president."

Villafuerte also said Typoco noted that "being a Lakas member he will await the go-signal of President Macapagal-Arroyo as to whom he shall support."

At the Palace, Rufino explained why the governors expressed support for Ms Macapagal despite her declaration not to contest the election. "They're professing support for her administration. They're waiting for her to make an announcement on who she would support (in 2004)."

With reports from Ronnie Lorejo, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau; Dona Pazzibugan, Carlito Pablo

Story behind the story

By Jerry Esplanada

"YOU can get more details from Louie."

Former Press Secretary Rod Reyes, a supporter of businessman Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco, was referring to Camarines Sur Gov. Luis Villafuerte—the man he called "one of the *pasinuno* (initiators)" of the Bicol governors' "covenant."

The agreement was reportedly in unified support of Cojuangco's presidential bid.

"They call it 'one for all, all for one' covenant," Reyes said, during a brief meeting in a Makati City coffee shop early last month. He added: "Louie has already committed to support Danding. He'll be happy to help you with that."

Reyes was right. Villafuerte confirmed the "good news" during a phone conversation a couple of days later. An INQUIRER correspondent based in Bicol had earlier given this reporter the governor's cell phone number.

Villafuerte also confirmed the existence of the covenant. He explained that the six governors were originally committed to support President Macapagal-Arroyo if she decided to run in next year's elections. But when she announced her withdrawal from the presidential race, Villafuerte said they decided to support Cojuangco.

Villafuerte said he and the other political leaders believed Cojuangco was the "most qualified among the presidentialists" and the "right man for the job."

He also said the Bicol leaders were "in the process of consolidating our political forces down to the barangay and precinct levels in the entire Bicol region."

Once, Villafuerte suggested that this reporter file the

"covenant for Danding story" in time for Cojuangco's formal announcement of his presidential bid. The governor said it would be "perfect timing."

A week or so later, this reporter made another call to the governor. He said he would be in Manila shortly. "Dyan na lang tayo mag-usap (Let's talk there)," Villafuerte said.

But the follow-up interview did not take place. I phoned the governor a third time, to tell him I was planning to see him in Naga City. Villafuerte asked me to call him "pag andito ka na (when you get here)."

As for fellow Bicolano Raul Roco, Villafuerte said Bicol leaders would rather support a non-Bicolano candidate like Cojuangco than somebody like Roco. He said the ex-senator and ex-education secretary was not worthy of their support.

Reyes yesterday seemed taken aback at the turn of events. He said he doubted "if Louie really made a turnaround."

He noted that Villafuerte had expressed his support for Cojuangco "as early as two or three months ago."

"He has already committed to Danding," he said.

Asked about the purported covenant of support for Cojuangco, Roco laughed.

He said Catanduanes Gov. Leandro Verceles (Lakas-CMD) called him up yesterday to assure him of his support. Roco also said Masbate Gov. Antonio Kho (Reporma) had only recently publicly endorsed Roco in Masbate and Palawan.

Roco said Villafuerte may not be aware that Cojuangco had already endorsed Villafuerte's rival, Camarines Sur Rep. William Felix Fuentebella, for governor. *With a report from Dona Pazzibugan*

Bicol govs deny report they're for Danding

From page A1

Rufino said Lee, like Villafuerte a member of the opposition, also called him up to deny the report.

"INQUIRER's report today is not true. Please tell Madame GMA we are always with her," Rufino quoted Lee as telling him.

Verceles, in a cell phone interview, also denied the claim. "I would prefer to wait for the decision of the party, which is now still in continuous consultation. The decision might probably be finalized by October."

No choice

Only Albay Gov. Al Francis Bichara, a member of the ruling Lakas-CMD, said the administration party did not have any choice but to support Cojuangco's presidential bid, since Ms Macapagal hasn't reconsidered her decision not to run in May 2004.

"The President has to decide as early as possible or else, if we decide unfavorably, (too late), the party will be in a very disadvantageous position."

"Danding has strengthened NPC. Good numbers of Lakas and loyal members support him," he added. "What we need right now is a president who can unite especially the political groupings who keep on quarrelling."

Villafuerte, who heads the biggest Bicol province, said in the interview with Esplanada that he declined to be quoted because the political situation was still very fluid.

"No local politician will support Danding just like that with the situation of the NPC at the local level," Villafuerte, also the LDP regional chair, said.

In Camarines Sur, the LDP remains at odds with a coalition of the NPC, Aksyon Demokratiko and Lakas-NUCD.

Villafuerte said he suspected that Cojuangco was only following the lead of ex-Ambassador Ernesto Maceda and former Speaker Arnulfo Fuentebella, the NPC chair for Camarines Sur.

"In fact, when Danding Cojuangco visited Camarines Sur (on Monday), all the Bicol gover-

nors were not invited and not any one of them attended the occasion which was strictly a Nationalist People's Coalition gathering," he said.

He also said that while Cojuangco was supposed to have consulted with the business sector, Church leaders and civic and people's organizations, no such meeting was held.

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With reports from Ronnie Lorejo, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau; Dona Pazzibugan, Carlito Pablo

Iranian twins die in surgery

From page A1

with them was touched by their personalities and the kind of people they were."

As one of the final points of the separation procedure, surgeons cut a finger-thick shared vein from Ladan—leaving her to rely on a similar sized vein taken from her right thigh that was grafted to her brain.

Rerouting the shared vein, which drained blood to their hearts, was considered one of the biggest obstacles in the surgery. German doctors told the twins in 1996 that the shared vein made surgery too dangerous.

The team of doctors had to contend with unstable pressure levels inside the twins' brains just before they worked to uncouple the sisters' brains and cut through

the last bit of skull joining them, according to hospital spokesperson Dr. Prem Kumar.

The sisters' brains had "to be teased apart very slowly," Kumar said. "Cut. Teased apart. Cut. Teased apart. In the process, you encounter a lot of blood vessels and other tissues."

He said surgeons worked "millimeter by millimeter."

Although the sisters knew the operation could kill one or both of them, they decided to face those dangers after a lifetime of living conjoined and compromising on everything from when to wake up to what career to pursue.

"If God wants us to live the rest of our lives as two separate, independent individuals, we will," Ladan said before the operation. (See sidebar on Page A18.)

An international team of 28 doctors and about 100 medical assistants were enlisted for the surgery. It was the first time surgeons tried to separate adult craniopagus twins—siblings born joined at the head.

Twins joined at the head occur only once in every two million live births, and successful separation is even rarer.

Surgery, however, has been performed successfully since 1952 on infants, whose brains can more easily recover.

The twins' homeland of Iran was plunged into shock and grief after television there broke into regular programming to announce the news. President Mohammed Khatami had pledged on Monday to pay the cost of the operation, estimated at \$300,000.

At Raffles Hospital in Singapore, hundreds of supporters and friends of the twins wept and hugged each other.

Ladan began to lose blood at around 2 p.m. (0600 GMT), and died at 2:30 p.m. (0630 GMT), doctors said. Brain surgery continued on Laleh, who died at 4 p.m. (0800 GMT).

Dr. Richard Ashcroft, head of medical ethics at London's Imperial College, said last week there would be no controversy if the sisters were at risk of dying without the operation. But they were not.

"It's a genuine moral dilemma," he said. "And where you have a dilemma, people will make different decisions because there is no obvious answer what the right thing to do is." *Reports from AP and Reuters*

They wanted to go their separate ways

From page A1

stopped trying, and their dream turned to tragedy on Tuesday in Singapore.

Their quest had taken them far from their parents at a young age, to Germany and finally to Singapore, where they underwent complex surgery knowing it could kill one or both of them. As the separation was coming to a close, a lot of blood was lost. Ladan died first, then Laleh hours later.

Although they'd planned to live together if the surgery was successful, they dreamed of independence and pursuing their own careers.

Ladan wanted to be a lawyer, Laleh a journalist.

"When we first opened our eyes to see the light, we wanted to be separated," Ladan, who was

the more extroverted sister, said at a news conference last month.

The sisters were born into a poor family of 11 children in Firouzabad, southern Iran. They were raised by doctors in the capital, Tehran, under the spotlight of the Iranian media.

They were cheerful as little girls and always had cuts, scratches and bruises on their hands, legs and faces from falling down while they played, the friend recalled.

Despite spending every minute together, the sisters displayed strong, distinct personalities from a young age. Ladan was talkative and enjoyed cooking—something Laleh, known as a quiet thinker, didn't enjoy. Laleh loved animals, but Ladan preferred to avoid them.

"We have different ideas about our lives," Laleh said last month,

explaining why they needed to be separated.

"Actually, we are opposites," Ladan interrupted, laughing.

As schoolgirls, they cheated on tests by whispering answers to each other. The government eventually caught on and concluded it would be nearly impossible for the sisters to compete individually in university entrance exams—so it granted them a joint scholarship to study law at Tehran University in 1994.

Despite Laleh's dream of becoming a journalist, she agreed to study law to help Ladan's ambition to be a lawyer.

However, the sisters were distracted by their wish to be separated and it took them 6 1/2 years instead of the usual four to obtain their degrees.

Their hopes were high in 1996,

when Iranian doctors helped them travel to Germany for tests ahead of possible separation surgery.

But they returned to Tehran heartbroken after German doctors told them the operation was too dangerous because the sisters shared a common vein that drained blood from their brains. On Monday, surgeons in Singapore believed they had overcome that problem after creating a new vein for Ladan.

After the disappointment in Germany, the twins' hopes for separation were rekindled after they heard about Dr. Keith Goh in Singapore leading a team that successfully separated 18-month-old Nepalese twins who had been joined at the head. An AP reporter in Tehran helped Ladan and Laleh contact Goh last year. *AP*

SMC head says ...

From page A1

A person familiar with the matter said the three companies together have contributed about P10 billion in interest income to UCPB since 1999. The loans carried prevailing market rates and were fully secured at the time of approval.

UCPB chair Edward Go refused to comment on the nature of the loans, explaining that it was the bank's policy not to comment on loans without the client's written consent.

The UCPB documents appear to be inconsistent with an in-house audit commissioned by the bank's own board of directors.

Skyssets

While Ang has admitted ownership, his name does not appear on the incorporation papers of the three firms.

One of Skyssets incorporators, however, is Cojuangco lawyer Gabriel Villareal, a member of the SMC board of directors until earlier this year—raising questions of possible self-dealing.

Skyssets had an 18-month aircraft lease agreement with Challenger Aero Corp., a subsidiary of San Miguel Corp. The contract, which expired on June 30 last year, had a lease rate of \$67,000 a month.

Two weeks after bagging a lease contract with SMC, Skyssets applied for a loan with UCPB. It got P120 million from UCPB on the same day the loan was approved. The audit report said the company was highly dependent on borrowings, having been in the red from 1997 to 2000 and in a cash crisis while servicing another loan, from PCIBank.

Lucky Star

UCPB's executive committee initially granted Lucky Star a P1-billion short-term loan in January 1999 to bridge-finance the acquisition of equipment and construction of a proposed cement plant in Sison, Pangasinan. A month later, the loan was raised to P1.4 billion but with no additional collateral cover.

In August the same year, UCPB agreed to convert the P1.4 billion credit line into a 7-year loan. Lucky Star said it was building a 3.6-million metric ton a year cement plant in Calatagan, Batangas, after it discovered that the Pangasinan plant site was near an earthquake fault line.

Among the collateral submitted by Lucky Star were shares

amounting to 98.8 percent of Northern Consolidated Cement Corp., a Northern Luzon cement plant founded by Cojuangco. The NCC shares were acquired by Ramon Ang who made P1.114 billion in advances to NCC in August 1998; the shares were transferred to Lucky Star a month after the loan conversion.

Two years later, the UCPB executive committee again approved the conversion of the P1.4 billion long-term loan into convertible notes after Lucky Star decided to abandon its Batangas project and undertake NCC's Line 3 expansion.

Under this deal, the UCPB agreed to include the P96 million in interest payments in the conversion—something the audit report noted was a clear and present danger that the company was not capable of servicing its obligation.

The report also noted that the loan was used not to buy machines but for long-term investments representing advances to various companies that were convertible into equity.

Asturias

Lucky Star's partner in the still-to-be-built Batangas cement project, Asturias Chemical Industries Inc., applied for a P2-billion loan in October 1999 for use as working capital or equity investments in an undisclosed company. Collateral offered included real estate properties in Batangas, assignment of the mineral production sharing agreement, and a pledge on shares of stocks to be acquired. The loan was approved even though the collateral requirements have yet to be received up to now, which the audit report said was a clear indication of default.

The loan was further extended for 60 days in December 2000 when the loan amount was reduced to only P1.4 billion to meet the bank's single borrower's limit. In February 2001, the loan was renewed at a lower value of P800 million with the same collateral. A year later, the UCPB executive committee approved a P750 million, 7-year loan to bankroll the cement plant.

The audit report said the bank did not make any credit investigation report when the loan was up for approval, specifically on the capitalization and experience of the management. These were critical factors, the auditor noted, considering that the loan was sizable and that the firm was only incorporated a trader and maker of white cement in 1996.

Banco Filipino Eyes Greater Prospects in Growing Economy

Upbeat on Court Wins in P18.8B Damage Claim

Banco Filipino, buoyed by the strong support of its depositors and the good performance of its many product lines, looks forward to greater opportunities as the economy starts to show signs of recovery.

Banco Filipino is poised to recapture its previous leading position in the industry with its vaunted "service a la CRM" and technological innovations designed to improve its service delivery to its growing clientele.

On the occasion of its 39th anniversary today, the Bank draws on its newfound strength and a gathering momentum as it moves forward, guided by its banking philosophy of "Commitment to Service Excellence."

"Our devotion towards improving every aspect of our service remains the focus of our attention," said Teodoro Arcenas, Jr., chairman and president of the Bank.

**"Our devotion
towards improving
every aspect
of our service
remains the focus
of our attention."**

The defendants led by the late-*CB Gov. Jobo Fernandez* filed a series of motions in an attempt to quash the damage suit. Motions by the *CB-BOL*, the Monetary Board and Fernandez caused delays, now lasting eight years, but all were invariably thrown out by the courts for lack of merit. The RTC has set the pre-trial conferences and the vindication for Banco Filipino depositors now gets closer and closer to realization.

It was noted that, once Banco Filipino obtains its final vindication, such a development will dramatically place the Bank on a whole new growth platform – and the ultimate winners are the Bank's depositors and clientele. Beyond the amount involved, the Bank's ultimate judicial triumph will reaffirm even more the faith of the Filipino people in the country's judicial system.

Service Excellence: Key to Steady Growth

"This has served us in good stead since 1964 (the year Banco Filipino was born), winning and keeping the loyalty of our depositors and other clients," he pointed out on the eve of the Bank's anniversary observance. "Such aspirations will remain the theme and rallying point for everyone in Banco Filipino."

The Bank's optimistic note is raised higher by its series of legal victories in its P18.8 billion claim from the Central Bank, the Monetary Board, and from the heirs of Jose "Jobo" Fernandez.

BF Supporters, Sympathizers Upbeat on P18-B from CB

Inspired by the series of legal victories achieved since its reopening in July 1994, Banco Filipino vowed to more vigorously pursue its P18.8 billion damage suit against the Central Bank of the Philippines and the Monetary Board that ordered its illegal closure in 1985.

Banco Filipino supporters and sympathizers remain upbeat that the record-setting civil case in terms of filing fee (P94 million) will eventually be brought to its logical conclusion and that in the end, justice will prevail.

The Bank's officers and staff said they are prepared to endure in their quest for justice. "When people who are aggrieved fight for their rights and win, they don't only uphold our freedoms, but also show how to empower the weak against the mighty through our judicial system," they said.

The Supreme Court declared that the closure of Banco Filipino with the use of military force in 1985 was illegal, having been carried out "arbitrarily and with grave abuse of discretion."

Banco Filipino eventually reopened in July 1994.

On May 29, 1995, Banco Filipino submitted to the Regional Trial Court of Makati the amount of its claims totaling at least P18.8 billion in damages arising from its illegal closure.

Banco Filipino Bank Services Targeting the Youth Market

Banco Filipino remains focused on the youth, specifically the young urban professionals, as a potentially large market for its ever-growing list of domestic banking services.

BF officials said the urban youth sector, which grows at an average of 400,000 annually, is expected to reach 4.3 million over the next 10 years.

The Bank continues to address the (banking) needs of this sector even as it looks at the specific needs of other segments of the market, positioning itself for the opportunities and the challenges that a revitalized economy will bring.

Banco Filipino remains committed to the realization of the dream of its founder, the late Tomas B. Aguirre, to "build an institution that will continue to grow and serve the Filipino people beyond our own lifetimes."

Banco Filipino's list of domestic banking services consists of savings, time, demand and foreign currency deposits; money transfer; safe deposit boxes; remittances; special collection; payroll; bills payment; ATM services; and savings gift certificate.

To enhance efficiency of its remittance services, the bank forged strategic tie-ups with e-Business, Inc., a local agent of Western Union, to facilitate inward remittances of overseas Filipino workers. Encouraged by the success of the tie-up, Banco Filipino now mulls expanding it to include outbound remittances and other dollar-denominated transactions.

On the commercial services department, the bank offers domestic letters of credit, foreign exchange dealership, import and export financing, inventory financing and receivables financing.

It is also engaged in money market services specifically deposit substitutes, as well as trust services such as educational, employee benefit, escrow agency, investment management accounts, living trust, property administration and trusteeship.

Its lending windows cover agricultural loans, bills discounting, commercial loans, consumer loans, housing loans, industrial loans, real estate loans and credit cards.



ANN TIPID



BIG EAGLE

Banco Filipino CRMs: Never Outclassed



Today's buzz words — Customer Relations Management and Relationship Marketing have been antedated by more than three decades by Banco Filipino with its friendly and unforgettable Customer Relations Models (CRMs), the lovely frontliners who hugged the headlines in their prime years.

A much-photographed CRM, Ms. Maria Fe "Girly" Relova is one of the first batch of CRMs, who rose from the ranks to become senior vice president (SVP).

"Banking relations used to be formal and stiff. The Bank veered away from this practice by employing CRMs who can relate well to people from all walks of life—from top executives to drivers or vendors," she said.

CRMs are always around to handle customer queries, and to provide a smiling human face to quality banking service. "This is a surefire way to keep customers because they feel special. That's when they're greeted with a smile and served with utmost dedication," she beamed.

They also teach new staff members the BF way of customer relations. "We tell them to loosen up and treat customers like family. After all, this is how we're being treated by management," she explained.

Ms. Relova held two posts in the Bank before retiring a month ago: SVP and, yes, a CRM. She concluded: "Being a CRM doesn't end when you get assigned to handle a higher responsibility. It is a commitment."

Pioneer Depositor Wins Lot in Raffle



Corazon Marti, now 69, is one of Banco Filipino's pioneer depositors. She opened a savings account with the bank's original branch in Sta. Cruz 39 years ago.

In 1964, a sign announcing the opening of Banco Filipino caught the attention of Ms. Marti, who had just started working for accounting firm SGV, then holding office in Ermita. She immediately decided to open an account.

"When Banco Filipino opened a branch in my neighborhood in San Juan, I transferred my original account," Ms. Marti said.

She renewed her relationship with Banco Filipino when it was reopened in July 1994 after several years of closure. What made her remain loyal to Banco Filipino? Ms. Marti said simply: "Friendly Service." "Everybody's pleasant in Banco Filipino. The CRMs allow me to deposit or withdraw even when I don't have my passbook." That's exceeding customer expectations. That's vintage Banco Filipino.

Ms. Marti's loyalty to Banco Filipino was amply rewarded during a recent raffle, where she won a 295-square meter lot in Las Piñas. "That's my most unforgettable gift from Banco Filipino," Ms. Marti smiled. "I wish the company the very best for the next 100 years, so it would grow stronger and be able to serve more people."

39 years
of commitment to excellent service
to you, the Filipino, as partners
...growing together.



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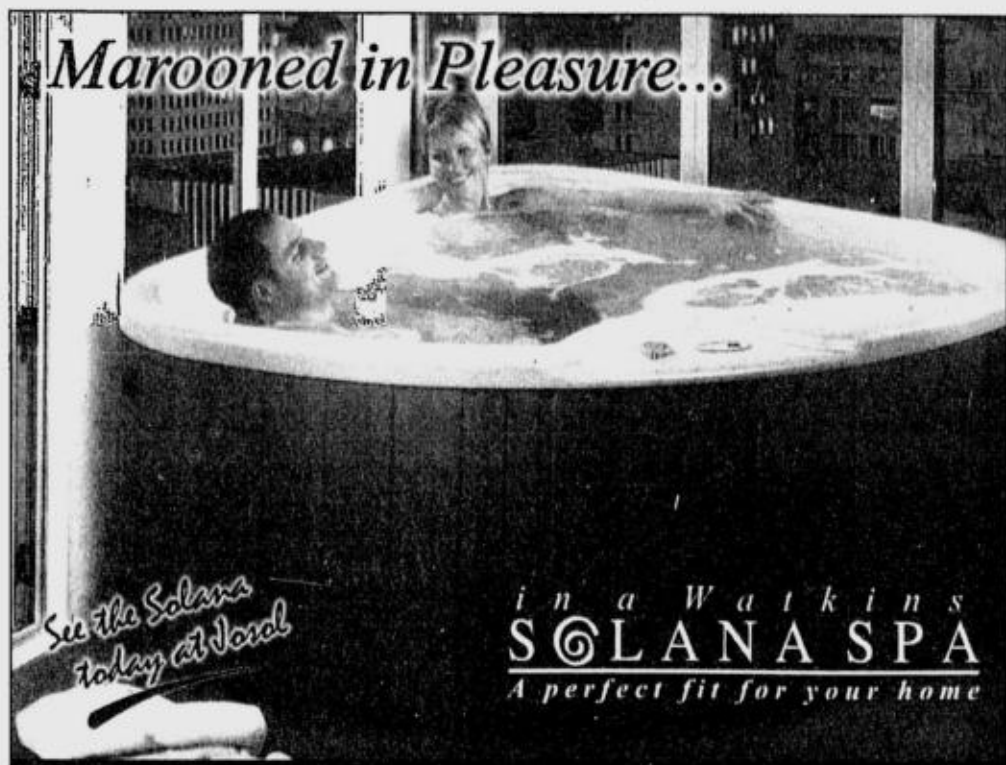
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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

**WEDNESDAY,
JULY 9, 2003**

Bishops urge healing of 'fallen' priests

By Blanche S. Rivera

THE COUNCIL of Christian Bishops of the Philippines (CCBP) yesterday said "fallen" Catholic clergy should be helped to heal and not blamed for their frailty.

The CCBP, an organization of Christian churches with some seven million members, also lauded the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) for addressing the clergy's problem.

CCBP chair Fred Magbanua said at a press briefing that many evangelical and protestant leaders had also known sexual temptation.

Asked to comment on the sexual misconduct of Catholic clergy, Magbanua said: "The Church is like an army. We are all soldiers of the Cross. We are all fighting, and somewhere in the battlefield, somebody is wounded. And most of the time, these are the outstanding ones."

He cited the cases of resigned Antipolo Bishop Crisostomo Yalung, who allegedly fathered two children

with his girlfriend, and Novaliches Bishop Teodoro Bacani Jr., who is being investigated by the Vatican for allegedly making sexual advances on his former secretary.

"Bishops Yalung and Bacani are very brilliant guys. These are the soldiers of Christ who have been hit by the enemy," Magbanua said. "What do we do with these fallen soldiers? Do we shoot them? No, we help in the healing. [We] pray that they will be healed and will continue on in the battlefield."

Magbanua stressed that according to the Bible, there was nothing wrong with religious leaders having families. He quoted the apostle Paul as saying that disciples should marry instead of burning with desire while living a single life.

It was only hundreds of years after the apostles' time that the Catholic Church imposed celibacy on priests, Magbanua said.

After a year of deliberations, the CBCP plenary council approved in principle only the past weekend the guidelines for handling sexual mis-

conduct among the clergy.

Magbanua said the protocol could guide and enlighten incoming priests on the Catholic Church's policy on sexual misdemeanors.

Positive development

Bayan Muna Rep. Liza Maza said the guidelines issued by the Church was a positive development, and urged its leaders to hold dialogues with women advocacy groups.

"It is good that the Catholic hierarchy is taking definite steps in addressing this issue," said the party-list representative. "This is a clear indication that the Church now recognizes that through the years, there have been a number of cases of sexual abuse and misconduct involving priests and other Church workers."

Maza, secretary general of the women's alliance Gabriela, also stressed the need to educate women on their rights and how they could address problems of violence and abuse within their homes, parishes and communities. With a report from Cynthia D. Balana

Father priest ...

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sembly, admitted that he had sired two boys aged 6 and 11, and sought forgiveness for "the pain he inflicted."

He then read aloud a letter he had titled "My Self Esteem."

"My pain is not like your pain," Maliluya quoted the priest as saying. "My joy is not like your joy, and my hopes are not like your hopes, so please don't compare me with others."

"I stand here before you not worthy, [which is why] I leave these garments here on the table. For I will go if you say so and if you do not accept my weakness and forgive my failings."

Then Ornopia sat on one of the chairs and bowed his head.

Maliluya said he was the first to rise, approach the rostrum, and speak.

"If I can't forgive you, Father," he recalled saying, "there is no meaning to the prayer we hold dear, the 'Our Father.'"

A woman next said: "Why can't we forgive you? Nobody among us is sinless enough to cast the first stone."

An old woman then gingerly walked to the front. Weeping, she told the assembly that there was never a time when she did not forgive her children who had repeatedly failed her.

Maliluya said no one among the parishioners was dry-eyed that morning.

"He celebrated the Mass for us, then during the exchange of peace, I embraced him," Maliluya said. "The others followed, and again tears flowed."

Family

Ornopia's case was brought into the open when two former members of his staff, Azucena Solon and Febes Opigal, told reporters of a local TV station about his "family."

Solon and Opigal—one who had worked three years in the parish as a laundry woman and the other, four years as a cook—said Ornopia had fired them for no clear reason, except that they were accused of spreading rumors about the priest's dalliance with a certain Luz from Leyte and their two sons.

Maliluya clarified that Solon and Opigal were fired because they had "conspired" to oust Ornopia's helper, Michael, from the convent with no clearance from the priest.

Ornopia reportedly adopted Michael, who came from an impoverished family, and spent for his education until he reached college.

Maliluya said the priest was "enraged" when he learned that the two women had kicked Michael out of the parish.

Ornopia's relationship with Luz started when he was in his third year at the San Carlos Seminary, according to Maliluya.

The two met through Luz's cousin, a classmate of Ornopia's. "They fell in love and even when he was ordained, they vowed to continue their relationship but on low profile," Maliluya said.

When Ornopia was assigned to a parish in Medellin town in northern Cebu, Luz regularly came to visit.

"When he was assigned here in Talamban, we didn't know of this story. And I admit it pained us a lot that this was exposed while he was our parish priest," Maliluya said.

He also said subsequent reports about Ornopia's relationships with two women, and that he had supported Luz and their sons using the parish coffers, were "untrue."

"I can attest to that because I know where the funds of the parish were spent. And Father Ornopia himself admitted that there is only one woman involved," Maliluya said.

Parishioners described Ornopia as hard-working.

They said that he had instituted programs benefiting indigent parishioners, and that he was instrumental in the success of the San Isidro Labrador Multi-Purpose Cooperative.

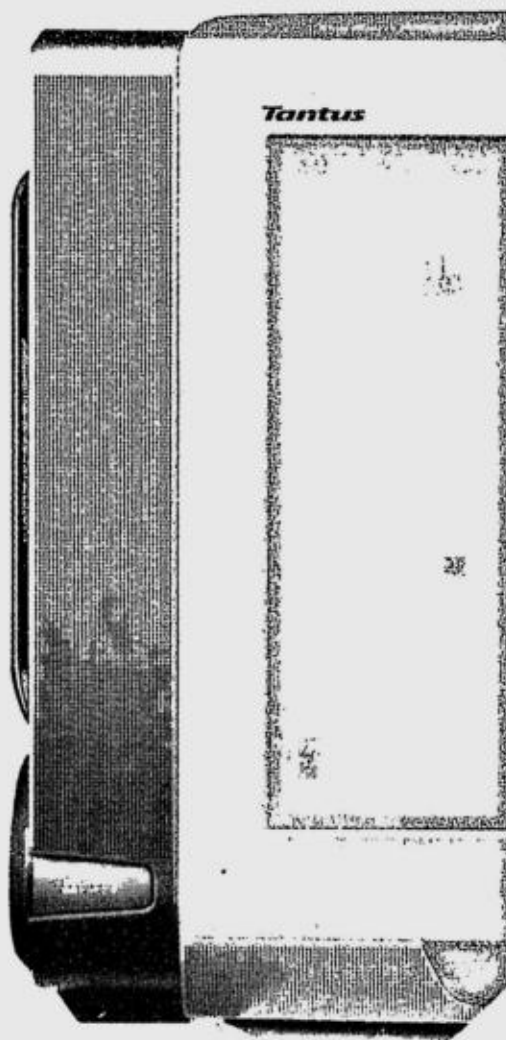
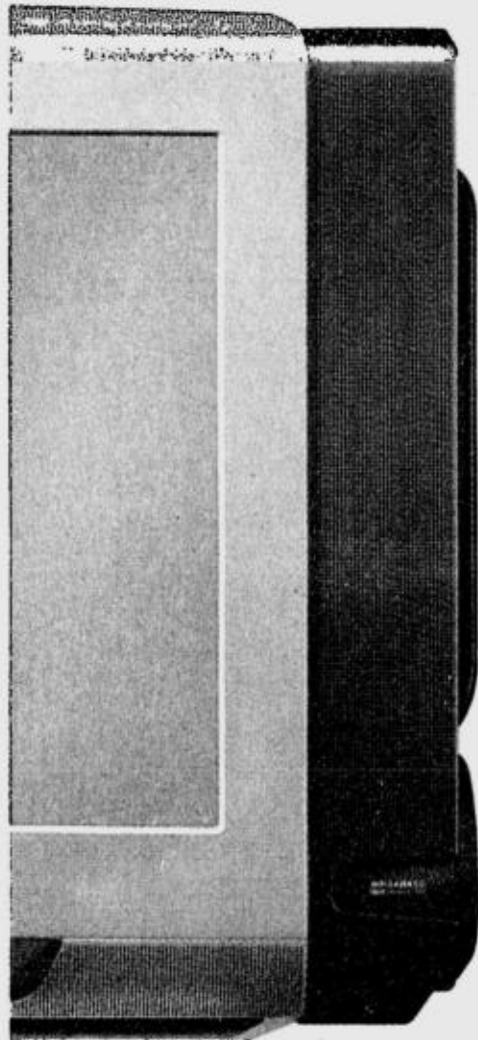
For his efforts, Ornopia was named one of 10 finalists for exemplary individual honors during the Ramon Aboitiz Award and Triennial Awards sponsored by the Ramon Aboitiz Foundation Inc. at the Waterfront Hotel in Cebu City on Jan. 23, 2000.

But now he is out of the parish.

Yesterday, Bishop Camilo Gregorio installed Fathers Nestor Montecillo, John Velardo and Dennis Daitol as the new pastoral team ministry in Talamban, replacing Ornopia and Fathers Russel Sungcad and Joselito Danao.

In his homily at the San Isidro church, the bishop said: "If we look at each other's sins, we will see more of it; it will be endless. Let us choose the better part instead, and heal rather than condemn, love rather than hate."

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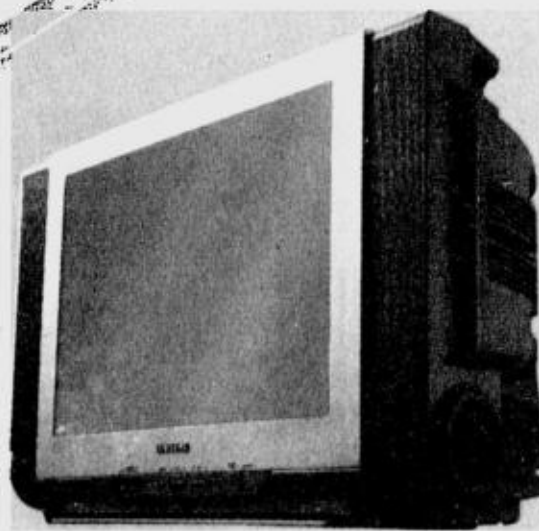
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Heart Health

THE PROMISE OF A NEW ANTI-CHOLESTEROL DRUG



by Gregorio B. Patacsil, M.D., F.P.C.P., F.P.C.C.

Atherosclerotic cardiovascular diseases remain the leading cause of death and premature disability in the modern world. Atherosclerosis is a complex process characterized by deposition of lipids or fats within large- or medium-sized arteries, which, in turn, leads to narrowing of these blood vessels. Eventually, hardening of the blood vessels develops, limiting blood flow to the different parts of the body. It is this limitation of blood flow that accounts for the spectrum of diseases and complications that result from the atherosclerotic process.

If the present trend continues, by 2020, cardiovascular disease is expected to reach epidemic proportions and will be a major cause of the total disease burden in the world. Although great success has been achieved in significantly decreasing death and disability due to acute coronary events such as heart attacks and strokes, there is still so much that could and should be done in treating the basic problem of atherosclerosis and preventing the complications that follow in its wake.

Many medical practitioners now apply the concept of risk assessment in evaluating their patients. The Framingham Heart Study, from which many

clinically important information have been derived, determined the relationship between cardiovascular risk and hypercholesterolemia, hypertension and other risk factors. Succeeding studies in Europe and the United States showed data that validated the concept of cardiovascular risk.

Cardiovascular risk factors may be divided into two groups: the modifiable risk factors that can be altered by medication or behavior and the "unmodifiable" risk factors such as genetics, age and gender. Abnormalities in plasma cholesterol, specifically the elevation of the low-density lipoprotein (LDL-C) or bad fat, low level of high-density lipoprotein (HDL-C) or good fat, and increased triglycerides (the 'sidekick' of LDL-C) are established risk factors in the development of atherosclerotic cardiovascular disease. If these risk factors are positively altered, then the complications associated with atherosclerosis may be prevented.

One way of modifying this recognized risk factor is by taking statins. Statins are a class of drugs that act on lipid metabolism and plasma lipoproteins by inhibiting an enzyme called HMG-CoA reductase to prevent the cascade of negative effects on the cardiovascular system brought about by atherosclerosis.

The ideal statin is one which significantly lowers the LDL-C and significantly increases the HDL-C. There are a good number of highly effective and unquestionably safe statins in the market today. There are statins that reduce LDL-C to levels and rates that

please many doctors, yet are unable to sustain an increase in HDL-C level consistently across dose ranges. Then, there are statins that increase HDL-C in a relatively consistent manner across dose ranges but, disappointingly, are unable to reduce LDL-C to levels and rates that can be considered clinically meaningful.

Based on available data, a recently approved statin known as Rosuvastatin (Crestor™) may fulfill this promise of the greatest reduction in LDL-C with significant advantage in HDL-C increase accompanied by a safety profile equivalent to the leading statins in the market today.

Head-to-head comparative studies show that 10 mg of Rosuvastatin (Crestor™) is significantly more effective than other statins in reducing LDL-C or "bad" cholesterol levels. In addition to the dramatic reductions seen with LDL-C, Rosuvastatin also significantly increases HDL-C or "good" cholesterol. Moreover, it reduces total cholesterol and triglycerides.

"With the efficacy seen in clinical studies, Crestor™ (Rosuvastatin) has the potential to make a real difference to more patients' lives," reports Dr. Gunnar Olsson, head of the Cardiovascular Therapy Area at AstraZeneca.

The author is the Past President of the Philippine College of Physicians, Past President of the Philippine Heart Association and Past President of the Philippine Society of Hypertension

Unmet Needs in the Prevention of Heart Disease Through Lipid-Lowering Therapy



by Esperanza I. Cabral, M.D., F.P.C.P., F.P.C.C.

Coronary artery disease (CAD) is the leading cause of death and disability in Western Europe and North America. The prevalence of CAD is escalating in the Philippines and other developing countries as the ways of the west are integrated into our cultures. It is estimated that by the year 2020, globalization will mean, among other things, that coronary artery disease will be the leading cause of death not just in the United States, but worldwide.

Elevation of blood cholesterol levels is one of the most important risk factors for CAD. In 1997-1998, a survey conducted by the Food & Nutrition Research Institute and the Department of Health, in cooperation with the Philippine Lipid Society, the Philippine Society of Hypertension and the Philippine Diabetes Association estimated that there were more than 1.4 million adult Filipinos with high blood cholesterol, who are, therefore, at higher risk of developing CAD than the rest of the population. Yet, we know that a significant number of patients are not receiving proper treatment for high blood cholesterol.

In the United States, where most patients have the benefit of free or subsidized medicines for high cholesterol through one insurance scheme or another, it is estimated that only one out of every five patients being treated attain

their goal lipid levels. Various reasons are given for this poor showing, one of which is that the medicines that are available are not sufficiently effective at the dosages considered to be safe.

In the Philippines, where the overwhelming majority of people have to pay for medicines out of pocket, the most important reason for not complying with treatment is the prohibitive cost of drugs. Thus, the statins, a group of drugs for the treatment of high blood cholesterol are often underused and goal cholesterol levels are all too infrequently achieved in patients who are at high risk for heart attacks and strokes.

With the foregoing demographic trends, cardiologists and other physicians are agreed that it seems necessary to establish a wider-ranging program of aggressive treatment of abnormal blood lipids with healthy lifestyle and more effective but affordable medicines.

Lipid-lowering therapy with drugs is an adjunct to, and not a replacement for, dietary and other therapeutic lifestyle changes, particularly a low cholesterol, low saturated fat diet, increased physical activity, weight loss, smoking cessation and moderation in alcohol intake when indicated. It is also of utmost importance that other risk factors for coronary artery disease such as high blood pressure and diabetes be controlled properly to reduce the risk for CAD and other manifestations of atherosclerosis such as strokes.

Rosuvastatin is a new statin with unique pharmacologic characteristics that translate into selectivity of effect in liver cells and enhanced

potency in its cholesterol lowering action. In patients with mild to moderately high lipid levels, 10 mg of Rosuvastatin reduces total and LDL (bad) cholesterol by 52% to 63%, significantly more than similar doses of the other statins available in the market today. This enables more patients to achieve total and LDL cholesterol goal levels with Rosuvastatin compared with the other statins.

Rosuvastatin also produces significantly more elevation in HDL (good) cholesterol and beneficially modifies triglycerides in many special populations, including diabetic patients, and may constitute a monotherapy option for such individuals. In addition, Rosuvastatin is well tolerated, exhibiting a safety profile similar to that of other available statins. Treatment of high blood cholesterol with this drug has a high milligram-for-milligram potency and a number of potentially desirable pharmacologic properties, which will enhance the proportion of patients meeting their lipid goals.

The principles of pharmacoeconomics dictate that for any illness, we should use the drug that provides us with the best value for our money, i.e., the most effective and safest medicine at the most affordable price. Thus, the availability of this new statin at a price that will challenge the rationale for using any other is welcome to the Philippine health scene.

The author is the President of the Philippine Society of Hypertension

ROSUVASTATIN, A New Super Statin



by Vicente Jose Y. Velez, M.D., F.P.C.P., F.P.C.C.

Undoubtedly, cardiovascular disease (CVD) is the scourge of modern times. With over 16.7 million deaths each year, it is estimated that one death every two seconds may be attributed to cardiovascular diseases. In fact, it is projected that the number of deaths from CVD may increase up to 36.3% by the year 2020. The numbers are staggering.

Factor in the reality that, mostly men, and a few women, are cut down at the very prime of their lives by this global menace. The loss of productivity for such individuals can cause a tremendous strain on themselves and their families, which translate to a

significant burden to society. The Global Burden of Disease Study calculated that approximately 9.7% of productive years are lost to an individual because of CVD. The facts are staggering.

There are certain actions that an individual can take to prevent or retard the development of cardiovascular disease. One way is through treatment of dyslipidemia (elevated blood cholesterol).

It is an accepted fact that a strongly positive relationship exists between elevated serum cholesterol, particularly LDL cholesterol, (also known as the "bad" cholesterol) and CVD risk and mortality. The Framingham survey concluded that for every 1% increase in total cholesterol, there is a 2-3% increase in coronary artery disease.

In the fight against dyslipidemia, the advent of the HMG-CoA reductase inhibitors, better known as statins, is indeed God-sent. Results from epidemiological

studies as well as from primary and secondary prevention trials with statins confirm that aggressive lipid-lowering therapy will undoubtedly reduce coronary heart disease with significant reduction of cardiovascular events and mortality. Statins provide greater reductions in LDL-cholesterol than any alternative lipid-lowering treatments, hence, their importance in the battle. More importantly, statins are, generally, very well-tolerated as a class of drugs.

Nevertheless, statins still have their limitations. There is the association with myotoxicity and hepatotoxicity in a small number of patients. In addition, many statins undergo hepatic metabolism involving the cytochrome p450 system, which gives rise to clinically significant drug-drug interactions.

All physicians treating dyslipidemia are searching for an ideal statin. What should be its characteristics? The ideal statin would be one that is effective in both

primary and secondary prevention with a good safety profile that has little risk for hepatotoxicity and rhabdomyolysis. It should have advantageous pharmacological properties including potent inhibition of HMG-CoA reductase, selective liver uptake, predictable pharmacokinetics and rare drug interactions. It should be able to decrease LDL-C maximally as well as reduce triglycerides and apolipoprotein B appropriately.

Moreover, it should have the ability to increase HDL-C (also known as the "good" cholesterol). This statin should also possess anti-inflammatory, anti-thrombotic and immunological effects. Administration should be convenient with a decreased need for combination therapy, less need for up-titration, taken anytime of the day and very much cost-effective. In the end, such a statin should be able to diminish the societal cost of coronary artery disease.

Based on available data, Rosuvastatin (Crestor®) appears to address many of these criteria. Crestor® (Rosuvastatin) is a very potent and long-lasting inhibitor of HMG-CoA reductase. It has a high affinity for hepatocytes. Also, it is relatively hydrophilic and, therefore, exhibits limited penetration of most cells, especially the liver cells. Because of its mild water solubility, it is excreted from the body without extensive metabolism by the cytochrome p450 system. This translates to little potential for drug-drug interactions.

With regards to efficacy, studies have shown that Rosuvastatin lowered LDL-C, total cholesterol, triglycerides and apolipoprotein B significantly compared to other statins. It also increased HDL-C across dose ranges.

In addition, it has a rapid onset of action. Clinical studies show that a therapeutic response is seen within 1 week of intake. In

two weeks, 90% of the maximum response is usually achieved. In fact, data point to as much as 50-60% decrease of LDL-C from baseline in a few weeks. This means that there will be no need for dose titration - no need for the patient to take a higher dose of medication - to reach the target total cholesterol and LDL cholesterol goal.

Moreover, Rosuvastatin has an excellent safety profile, similar to other currently-marketed statins, as seen from clinical experience in over 15,000 patients.

Rosuvastatin may not yet be the "holy grail" in the search for the ideal statin to combat the scourge of dyslipidemia and, hence, cardiovascular disease. It will surely provide a better starting point in the journey to better cardiovascular health.

The author is the National President of the Philippine College of Physicians

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METRO

Driving in Ayala tunnel?

By Leila B. Salaverria

WATCH out! Don't hit this wall.

This warning goes out to all motorists passing through the southbound lane of the Edsa-Ayala tunnel.

It is prompted by a three-meter wall that suddenly protrudes from the side of the tunnel which has already killed at least two young people whose cars slammed right into it.

Ironically, according to the Department of Public Works and Highways, the wall and the long open space or "lane" that leads to it were designed to save lives during emergencies.

Metro Manila Development Authority Chair Bayani Fernando said the wall and the space before it posed a grave risk to motorists.

"What if a driver gets distracted for a few seconds? The next thing he knows is that a wall is looming in front of him," he told the INQUIRER.

The wall is on the left side and is some 130 meters from the tunnel entrance.

Danger on the 'left'

Motorists entering the tunnel using the leftmost lane and driving alongside the tunnel wall would drive right into it—especially when the tunnel is dark or dimly lit.

Had the protrusion not been there, then there would be less reason for accidents, Fernando said.

"If the wall is not there and the vacant space that forms the corners is not there, there will be no danger," Fernando said.

MMDA Traffic Operations Center Director Angelito Vergel de Dios said the protrusion made drivers think that there was an "extra lane" in the tunnel, only for them to discover that the tunnel suddenly narrowed midway.

But a DPWH engineer, who requested anonymity, said the perception that the tunnel narrowed down was only an "optical illusion" created by the extra space caused by the wall.

Engineer Takashi Okumara of Katahira and Engineers, the DPWH's consultant for the project, said the Ayala tunnel had three lanes through and through.

He pointed out that it was not sound engineering practice to build a tunnel that started with three lanes and ends up with two.

Not in the design

According to Okumara, the protrusion was not part of the original design of the tunnel. However, the design had to be modified to accommodate the passenger platform of the underground Metro Rail Transit (MRT) station and the downramp of the Edsa-Ayala underpass.

He disclosed that there were actually two protrusions along the Ayala tunnel. The first is a one-meter wall jutting out to adjust to the MRT platform. The second is the three-meter protrusion



EVEN in broad daylight, the protruding second wall measuring three meters wide is hardly visible to motorists. Roughly between 50,000 and 60,000 vehicles pass through the Ayala tunnel daily per direction, according to Steve Cases of the MMDA's Air Quality office. Map below shows where the "danger wall" is.

ROMY HOMILLADA

for the southbound downramp of the Edsa-Ayala underpass.

The DPWH engineer said that had the MRT station been built elsewhere, the downramp would have been built in its place and there would not have been any need for the three-meter protrusion.

Important purpose

Notwithstanding the anomaly in the tunnel's design, the Japanese consultant said the space created by the three-meter wall served a crucial purpose—that of serving as an emergency area in case the MRT station needed to be evacuated.

A door on the wall of the vacant area leads to the MRT station.

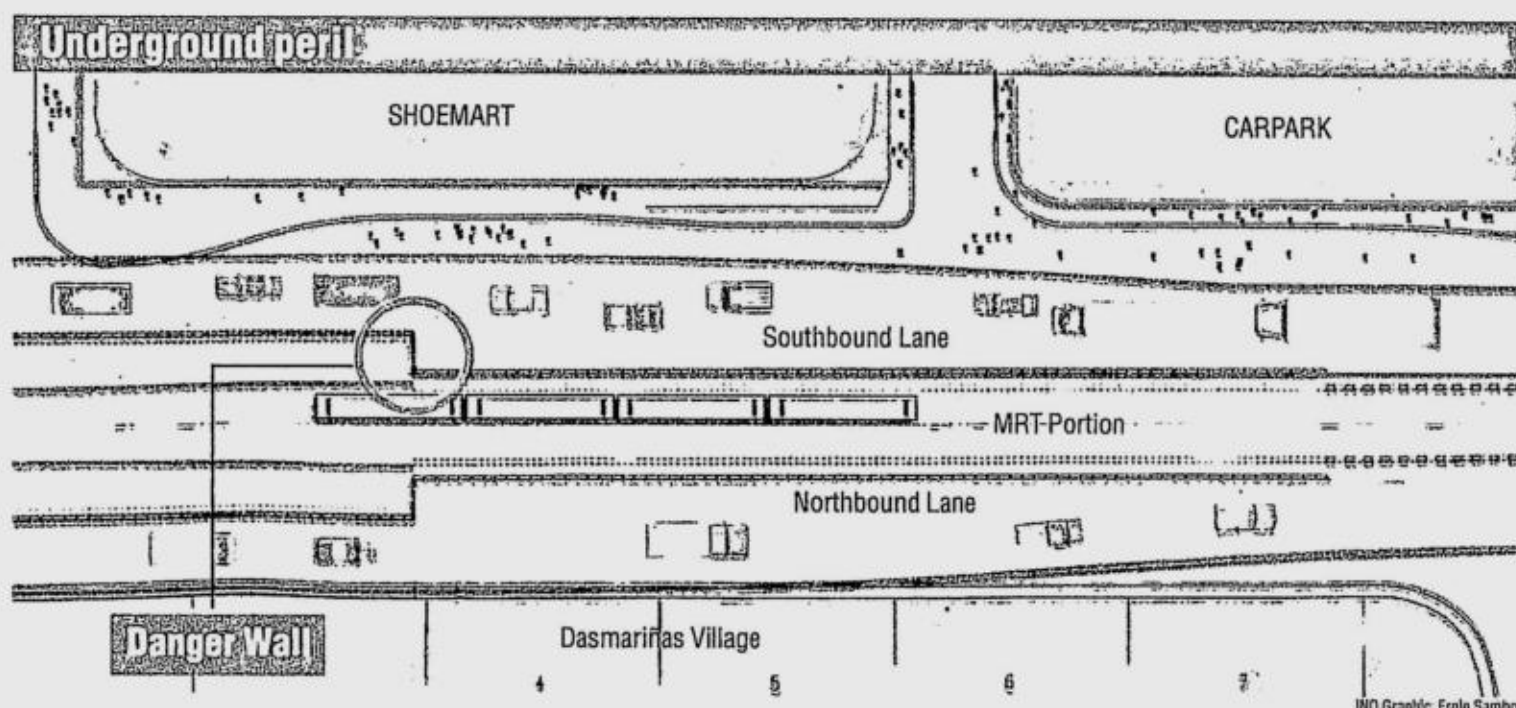
The DPWH engineer said the underground passenger platform of the MRT in Ayala was so narrow that if an emergency occurred, people would need a quick escape route.

Also, Okumara said the extra space would serve as an emergency shoulder for vehicles getting stalled inside the tunnel.

He said vehicles that would stall in the tunnel would need an area to park. Without the shoulder, traffic could get congested every time a vehicle got stalled.

But the consultant admitted that the wall could confuse motorists and measures had to be set in place to avoid accidents.

He said that after the tunnel



was completed in July 2000, a red blinking light and pavement studs were installed to warn motorists of the wall.

No power, no light

However, the light at times did not work because the power cables in the tunnel got stolen, plunging the tunnel in darkness, he said.

The consultant said they always replaced the cables, but these got stolen again, along with other important instruments.

Okumara added the DPWH had placed pavement studs—

small raised lumps—in the vacant area to warn motorists that they are not supposed to drive there.

"We can't control drunk or too much sleepy drivers. Such drivers can hit anywhere," he said.

In April this year, Joseph de los Reyes, a graduate student at the University of the Philippines, died when the Toyota Revo he was driving hit the concrete protrusion.

The police said he was killed instantly.

In February 2001, the tunnel also claimed the life of Michael

Jose Lapuos, 20, of Morato Street in Dasmariñas Village, Makati City.

He would have graduated from the De La Salle University that June.

Chatter bars

Lapuos was driving a Honda Civic with a friend when his car crashed into a concrete barricade in the "dimly lit" tunnel.

It is too late to change the design of the tunnel and it would be too costly.

To prevent more mishaps, the MMDA has installed chatter bars

or foot-high hump-like mounds that rattle a vehicle that runs over them.

The chatter bars are meant to rouse a driver who may have fallen asleep and warn him that he is about to run into a wall.

Traffic director Vergel de Dios said sandbags, to cushion any impact on the wall, and additional lighting had also been installed in the tunnel.

But Okumara frowned on the installation of the chatter bars saying these were so high the drivers of stalled vehicles would find it hard to park there.

'Tiangge' stirs up Malabon residents

By Tarra Quismundo

IN MALABON, not everyone likes the *tiangge* (flea market).

Some residents in Barangay Panghulo have complained over the weekend about the *tiangge* on Rodriguez Street.

They said the *tiangge* was illegal and that barangay officials were charging P150 for a day's rent of a stall, but without issuing official receipts.

The residents added that the *tiangge* occupies a street used by tricycles and other vehicles.

"(The *tiangge*) disrupts traffic, since the whole street is blocked," a resident said.

Panghulo Barangay chair Ian Emmanuel Borja de-



nied the allegations, saying the *tiangge*, which has been going on since Christmas last year, was legal.

The *tiangge* has since been put up on Rodriguez Street every Sunday.

He said that the barangay council had passed resolution number 08-A 2003, which allowed for a *tiangge* in the area. But Borja could not show the INQUIRER a copy of the resolution.

"It's a promotional activity for Panghulo, so that people would know our place not just as a barangay with one of the worst flooding problems in Metro Manila," Borja said.

Flood waters in Panghulo reach waist level after heavy rains, he said.

Borja said the *tiangge* was a way to liven up Rodriguez Street, where there was not much activity on a regular day. He also denied that barangay officials were charging rent from stall owners.

"We only accept donations from stall owners who give food items like coffee to our barangay officials," Borja said.

But the complaining residents contend that the *tiangge* must stop and that the street must be returned to the motorists.

Doctor shoots noisy boarders, kills one, injures 2 others

By Amy Remo

A DOCTOR was arrested Monday night for allegedly shooting his three tenants, killing one of them, after he was awakened by their laughter and loud conversation.

Dr. Anthony Lopez was nabbed after he allegedly shot Carlo Magno, 31, Jedan Macaña, 23; and Oscar Vicente, 21.

The three were bed spacers in Lopez's house on Iriga Street in La Loma, Quezon City.

Police said Magno died from sever-

al gunshot wounds in the body.

Macaña and Vicente were both reported in serious conditions in two different hospitals.

Police said Lopez was sleeping in his bedroom at about 8 p.m. when he was awakened by the loud laughter of his tenants who were in his living room.

Lopez asked the three to keep the noise down and went back to sleep. But a few minutes later, the tenants made loud noises again.

This irritated Lopez who took his gun and fired at the tenants, police

said.

One of Lopez's neighbors, who did not want to be named, alleged that the doctor, who held a private clinic in his house, had often threatened to shoot his neighbors.

The neighbor said there had been several occasions when Lopez had aimed his gun at the residents.

Lopez had also forced his parents and other members of the family out of his house, the neighbor added.

Lopez is now detained at the Criminal Investigation Unit of the Central Police District.

Flood control project to push through

By Tina Santos

THIS time it's for real," said Malabon-Navotas Rep. Ricky Sandoval as he announced yesterday that the long-overdue Camanava Flood Control and Drainage System Improvement Project would finally push through.

Sandoval said the project would be

inaugurated by President Macapagal-Arroyo on July 25. It covers 18.48 sq km of flood-prone areas in Camanava and will cost about P5 billion to complete.

The Japan Bank for International Cooperation will fund P3.5 billion of the project. Nishimatsu Construction Co., Ltd. won the bid to construct the project. The target date of comple-

tion is May 2007.

Residents of Camanava yesterday heaved a collective sigh of relief after Sandoval made the announcement. Even the displaced residents, who opposed the project took the announcement as a piece of good news.

Local government officials said it would attract investors to open businesses in the Camanava area.

Raid on Valenzuela warehouse yields P40M in illegal rice

By Tina Santos

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday joined Valenzuela City officials, as well as police and National Bureau of Investigation members in raiding a warehouse where some 40,000 bags of illegally repacked National Food Authority rice were seized.

Mayor Emmanuel Carlos said that when he informed the President that an operation was underway, Ms Macapagal did not hesitate in joining the raiding team.

The authorities, armed with a search warrant issued by Valenzuela Judge Floro Alejo, seized the remilled rice with an estimated repacked value of P40 million from the warehouse in Pearl Island, Phase 2, Barangay Punturin at around 10 a.m.

Carlos said that Metro Grains Mar-

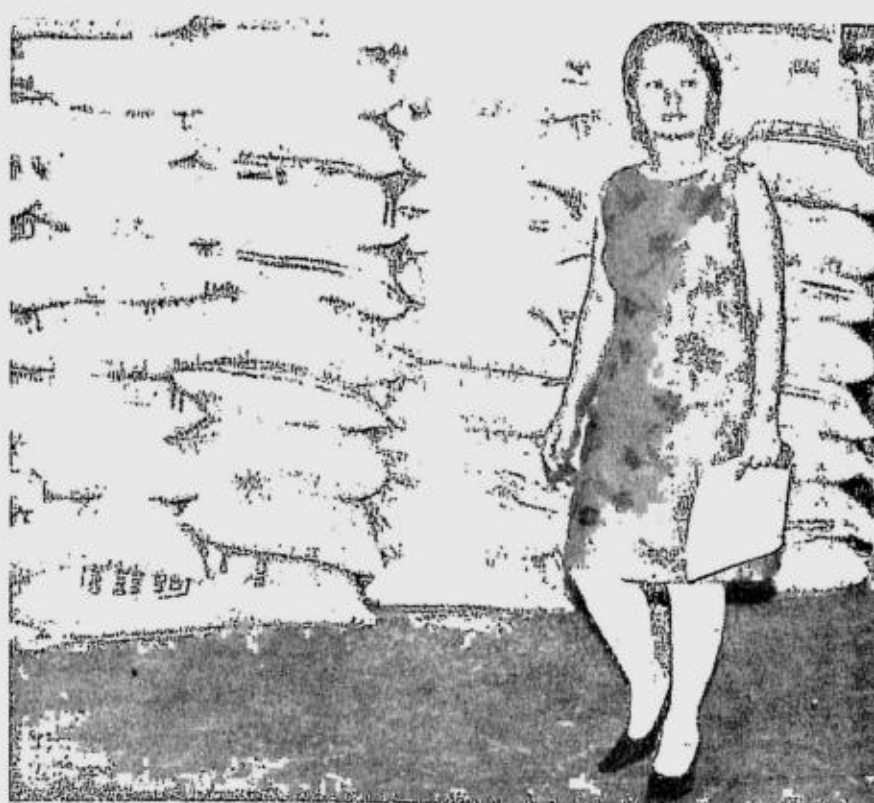
keting, a cooperative of "organized rice millers" in Luzon, rented the warehouse where the illegal rice was stored.

The raiding team only found a caretaker identified only as Jenny and some 11 workers in the premises, police said.

The Valenzuela mayor said that the unauthorized remilling and rebagging of NFA rice was first discovered by the City Business License Office on June 26, when officials conducted a routine inspection of the establishment.

City police chief Supt. Jose Marcelo said officials of MGM, a licensed NFA rice retailer, could not produce the required documents. He said the papers are now being reviewed by the NBI.

The rebagged rice, already labeled with various brand names when the authorities found them, were earlier thought to be smuggled into the country from India.



PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo surveys some of the sacks of illegal rice which she has helped seized in a raid at a Valenzuela warehouse.

EDWIN BACASHAS

But authorities said that the rice had been purchased from the NFA at a cheap price and had been repacked for sale at commercial rates in Metro Mani-

la markets.

Carlos said NBI agents also had documents showing that MGM has no authority to remill or rebag the NFA rice.

Blanca trial starts off with surprise

ON THE first day of the Nida Blanca murder trial, government prosecutors pulled a surprise when they called a witness who was not among those subpoenaed by the Pasig City Regional Trial Court.

But defense lawyer Salvador Panelo yesterday did not object, and the proceedings went on smoothly, according to Lori Uson, interpreter of RTC Branch 156.

Movie and Television Review and Classification Board guard Manuel Macasa took the witness stand and narrated how he found the body of Blanca in the morning of Nov. 7, 2001 at the Atlanta Centre in Annapolis, San Juan.

Blanca's daughter, Katherine Jones Torres, was absent during the trial.

The primary suspect is Rod Lauren Strunk, Blanca's husband who is currently being detained at the Sacramento County jail in the United States pending extradition to the Philippines. He is being tried in absentia.

His co-accused, Philip Medel, was at the trial.

Police Supt. Ma. Cristina Freyra, the medico-legal officer who examined Blanca's body, was not able to testify because of time constraints, Uson said.

Freyra is expected to be called to the witness stand on July 15. *Luige del Puerto*

Katipunan tree-cutting gets green light

BF sees no alternative to ease congestion on QC road

By Leila Salaverria

METROPOLITAN Manila Development Authority Chair Bayani Fernando, yesterday announced that the road project on Katipunan Avenue would go ahead as planned.

The MMDA project—which called for the removal of the service islands on Katipunan Avenue, as well as the trees that are planted in the islands—has been roundly criticized by residents, officials of the universities in the area and environment groups.

Fernando said that the MMDA would be pushing through with its plan "as soon as possible." But he also promised to take into account the opposition groups' alternative suggestions.

"All these (suggestions) we shall consider, but we still have to push through with the removal of the service islands to effect significant change in the traffic situation in the area," Fernando told reporters.

He would not give the exact date when the project would resume.

Among the alternatives the opposition groups suggested to the MMDA are the

revival of the shelved drop-and-ride plan, a four-day school week and carless day for Ateneo students, and the building of a bridge between Ateneo and Miriam.

Environmentalists and officials from Ateneo, Miriam and UP met with MMDA officials on Monday to present their alternative plans.

MMDA General Manager Robert Nacianceno and Department of Environment and Natural Resources Secretary Elizea Gozun presided over the meeting, attended by other DENR officials.

Nacianceno said some of the suggestions of the opposition group, like the drop-and-ride plan and the bridge, have been proposed by the MMDA before. The drop-and-ride had been shelved after a spate of bomb scares gripped the metropolis.

As to the suggestions of a carless day and a four-day school week, Nacianceno said that these need the approval of the students or their parents.

Nacianceno asked the groups to first conduct studies to determine the feasibility of the proposals.

The MMDA manager also questioned

the mandate of some of those who met with him on Monday.

In an interview, he said some of the individuals were not representing any specific group. He said those who met with him allegedly could not speak for other groups opposed to the Katipunan project.

"If they have no assurance of their membership, what assurance do we have that the people (in Katipunan) will approve (of their proposals)?" he told reporters.

Officials of schools on Katipunan, residents, and members of environmentalist groups earlier said that the removal of trees would be bad for the area. They said the trees provide fresh air and shade, and help control flooding.

MMDA officials have cited the worsening traffic congestion as the reason for the removal of service islands. They said there is a need to widen the avenue because of the volume of traffic and because Katipunan is part of C-5.

Fernando also said that congestion on Katipunan is getting so bad that it tends to back up vehicular traffic all the way to Marikina, his hometown.

Fernando has fan in Erap's son

By Luige del Puerto

OPPOSITION San Juan Mayor JV Ejercito has a "soft spot" for the strongman of the Metro Manila Development Authority.

Ejercito described MMDA chair Bayani Fernando yesterday as the "sole saving grace" of the Macapagal administration.

"He is the only official who is really working hard," Ejercito said. "He is the saving grace of this administration."

The mayor, who is ousted President Joseph Estrada's son by his wife, said Fernando has been doing "very well." He specifically mentioned how the MMDA chair is trying to ease traffic in the metropolis.

Ejercito said despite his and other mayors' differences with some of Fernando's views, he found the man to be sincere in improving the lives of Metro Manila residents.

Last month, Metro Manila mayors had decided to take over traffic management from the MMDA, relegating the agency to a mere "coordinating body."

The MMDA is set to lose more than P90 million a year from the fines and penalties collected from erring motorists if the mayors' plan pushes through.

Ejercito's description of Fernando as the "saving grace" of the present administration is a far cry from how militants and environmentalists regard the MMDA strongman.

Militants have demonized Fernando for his "anti-poor policies," particularly for his relentless drive against illegal vendors. For this, he has been called "Hitler."

Environmentalists have also criticized Fernando's plan to cut down the trees along Katipunan Avenue.

F. T. Castañeda; 67

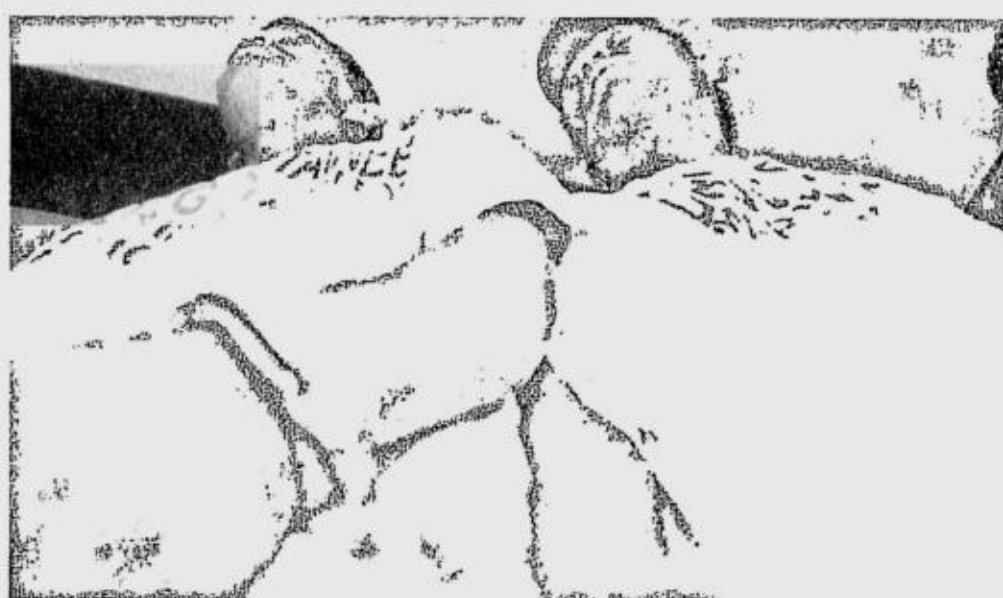
FELISA Trinidad-Castaneda, civic worker and widow of Ernesto Castaneda, former barangay chairman of Namayan, Mandaluyong City, passed away in Westminster, California on July 4 at age 67.

Her parents, brothers, sisters, children, grandchildren and other relatives request the pious reader for prayers and kind deeds for the eternal repose of her soul.

She will be interred at the El Toro Memorial Park in Lake Forest, California next Wednesday.

Oops, sorry

IN THE story "Fake reporter caught soliciting cash in Pasay," which appeared on page A19 in the July 5 issue of the Inquirer, suspect Francisco Noel was actually arrested in Las Piñas City, not in Pasay City as reported.



THESE two men are among eight suspected drug offenders arrested in Marikina City.

JOAN BONDOL

METROBRIEFS

NBP ends the long wait

THE LONG wait is over for visiting relatives of National Bilibid Prisons inmates. If before, visitors had to line up for hours just to see their convicted relatives, a new scheme promises them seeing their kin in 60 minutes. NBP director Francisco Abunales said the key was a "package counter" where packages are inspected as visitors are frisked in searching booths. With the new scheme, about 500 visitors were able to see the people they were visiting in 60 minutes. Before, inspecting and accommodating visitors at the penitentiary took three to four hours. Abunales said they also purchased six new computers to hasten and improve the listing of visitors. The NBP receives up to 2000 visitors on Saturdays and up to 3,000 on Sundays. *Edson Tandoc Jr.*

Not fast enough

TWO TEEN robbers who could not run as fast as their two accomplices were arrested by the police after robbing the passengers of a jeepney in Navotas the other day. The two, of Barangay NBBN, are now detained at the Navotas police station. The police said the teen suspects with two others had just gotten off the jeepney they had victimized when patrolling lawmen spotted them. The four ran off but the two were caught after a brief chase. Northern Police District Director Marcelino Franco Jr. attributed the arrest to the Philippine National Police Huli Agad program which boosts police patrol and visibility in crime prone areas. *Tarra Quismundo*

Man stabs bro-in-law

SATURNINO Cads, 28, reportedly wanted his brother-in-law Rene Negre to stop beating his sister but he himself ended up getting killed late

Monday evening in Pasay City. According to the police, Cads and Negre, both of Barena Compound, Barangay 201, Merville Access Road, Pasay City, engaged in a fist fight at around 11:30 p.m. in front of the Melon Drugstore along Kalayaan Avenue. Amid the exchange of blows, Negre pulled out a 13-inch knife and stabbed Cads. The suspect was nabbed by barangay tanod Zoilo Gelindon as he tried to flee. He is detained at the Pasay City Jail. *Edson Tandoc Jr.*

Criminology stude in crime

A THIRD year Criminology student cut short his dream of becoming a police officer after he was arrested for illegal possession of firearms. Ariel Mariano, 19, of Pearl Street, Fairview, Quezon City, was arrested by operatives of Stallion 5 at Barangay West Fairview shortly after midnight yesterday. Police reports said Mariano and a 17-year-old male companion got involved in a gang war which prompted Mariano to run home and get a .45 pistol. He was later caught by lawmen while flashing the gun and threatening members of the other gang. *Amy Remo*

P200M to collect

TEN OF the top 100 business tax payers in Taguig, including the Manila Electric Company, still owed the municipal government more than P200 million. The tax deficiencies were incurred in 2001-2002, a statement from the local government said. The local government has already issued notices of assessment to Metro Drug Inc., PSI Technologies, PSMT Philippines Inc., Triumph International Philippines Inc., Gen. Electric Philippines Meter, Penn Philippines Inc., Marsman Drysdale Foods Corp., Comark International and Meralco. *Edson Tandoc Jr.*

Suspected drug district again under quarantine

By Luige del Puerto

MARIKINA officials have imposed a quarantine on a city district for the second time, after police officials learned that illegal drugs distribution has been revived in the once-isolated area.

City officials are hoping that by imposing a quarantine on a specific district, they would be able to stamp out the use and sale of illegal drugs in the area.

"We realized that if we really want to accomplish what we want, we have to do it—put certain areas under quarantine," said Marikina Vice Mayor Marion Andres, head of the city's anti-illegal drugs campaign.

Local officials last month claimed that the quarantine system had broken the drug network and emboldened people to report suspects.

But Andres said that "based on police intelligence and our own research, drugs still come from these places, especially the Tuman District."

When Metro Manila Development Authority Chair Bayani Fernando was still mayor of Marikina, he put the district and eight other areas under quarantine.

His wife, incumbent Marikina Mayor Marides Fernando, continued the program when she took over. But she said she had to shelve the system because of the amount involved.

This time, the program would continue until "all the drug pushers are gone or have transferred to other places," Andres said.

But he said the city has revived the campaign with a heavy heart. "It is such a waste of cash," The vice mayor said in Filipino. "The money could have been used for livelihood programs or for medical services. I wish we didn't have problems like this, but we do. And we have to spend to stop these problems."

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SPORTS

Assistant Editor Edwin M. Villanueva

RP gold medal haul 'to exceed 31'

By Marc Anthony Reyes

THE PHILIPPINE Olympic Committee (POC) expects the country's campaigners in the Southeast Asian Games in Vietnam in December to surpass their haul of 31 gold, 65 silver and 67 bronze medals from the previous SEAG in Kuala Lumpur.

But that's just about what the Philippine Olympic Committee can promise as SEA Games technical committee chair Steve Hontiveros refuses to make any ball-

park figure for the medal harvest until he is able to talk, one-on-one, with all the Vietnam-bound athletes next month.

"It's very hard to make any pre-

dictions," Hontiveros said during yesterday's PSA Forum.

"We need to talk to the athletes first, which we will do after we have finalized the lineup."

He said members of his committee will soon hold separate meetings with the 400-plus athletes to boost their morale and to try to assess their chances in the biennial Games.

Unlike the Philippine Sports Commission, which earlier made a gold harvest forecast of

"at least 40 gold medals" in the Vietnam Games, Hontiveros said the POC wants to make "a more accurate estimate." He said that through the meetings, the athletes themselves will help the POC assess their medal potentials.

"After everybody is all accounted for, we will talk to them and ask them to give us the real picture," Hontiveros said. "We cannot just rely on the credentials they (athletes) gave us."

With the 31-65-67 medal count, the Philippines wound up fifth overall in Kuala Lumpur—the country's worst finish in the meet's six previous editions.

Malaysia emerged SEAG overall winner for the first time. Thailand came next, followed by Indonesia and Vietnam.

The POC expects the host country to figure even more prominently in the medal battles in the games to be held in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City.

The Philippines finished with a tally of only 20 gold, 26 silver and 41 bronze medals in 1999 but still salvaged fourth place.

Both the PSC and the POC are hoping the country will make a splash in Vietnam before the Philippines takes its turn to host the Games in 2005.

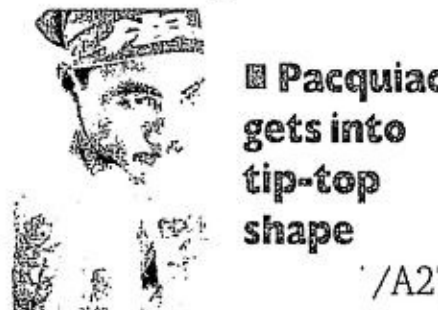
The country has never won the overall championship. It finished one gold shy of the title in the 1991 edition in Manila won by Indonesia with 92.

WHAT'S INSIDE

■ Qualifier makes US Open history /A28



■ Aussies grab Tour limelight /A28



■ Pacquiao gets into tip-top shape /A27



■ Resurgent TNT seeks to equalize vs Coke /A26



Compiled by Lorenzo Manguiat

GOLF: Farmers Charity Classic; 11:30 a.m. (r) and 4 p.m.; Star Sports - Catch the first and second rounds of this tournament in Michigan.

LPGA Championship; 2 p.m.; ESPN - The best women's golfers try to survive and make the cut as the second round goes underway.

MOTOR SPORTS: F1 Mobil 1 French Grand Prix; 11 p.m. (r); Star Sports - Get another dose of adrenaline rush in this replay of the French Grand Prix.

CYCLING: Tour de France; 12 p.m. (r - 6:30 p.m.); ESPN - The best cyclists peddle their way to the top as Stage 3 continues in France.

BASKETBALL: Connecticut Sun vs Detroit Shock; 7:30 a.m. (r - 10 p.m.); Solar Sports - Connecticut clashes with Detroit in this WNBA Eastern Conference battle.

BILLIARDS: Asian 9-Ball Tour; 9 a.m. (r); Star Sports - Take a look back at quarterfinal action of the Manila leg.

TRACK AND FIELD: IAAF Golden League Highlights; 9 p.m.; Star Sports - The world's fastest men and women gather in France.

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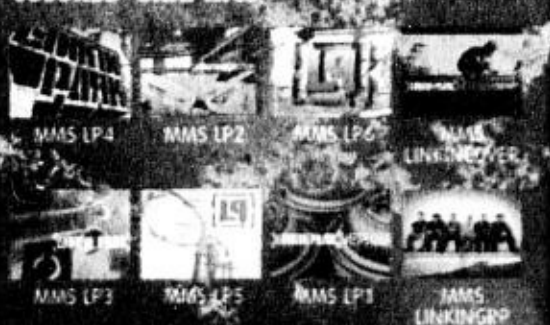
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SPORTS

RP gold medal haul 'to exceed 31'

By Marc Anthony Reyes

THE PHILIPPINE Olympic Committee (POC) expects the country's campaigners in the Southeast Asian Games in Vietnam in December to surpass their haul of 31 gold, 65 silver and 67 bronze medals from the previous SEAG in Kuala Lumpur.

But that's just about what the Philippine Olympic Committee can promise as SEA Games technical committee chair Steve Hontiveros refuses to make any ball-

park figure for the medal harvest until he is able to talk, one-on-one, with all the Vietnam-bound athletes next month.

"It's very hard to make any pre-

dictions," Hontiveros said during yesterday's PSA Forum.

"We need to talk to the athletes first, which we will do after we have finalized the lineup."

He said members of his committee will soon hold separate meetings with the 400-plus athletes to boost their morale and to try to assess their chances in the biennial Games.

Unlike the Philippine Sports Commission, which earlier made a gold harvest forecast of

"at least 40 gold medals" in the Vietnam Games, Hontiveros said the POC wants to make "a more accurate estimate." He said that through the meetings, the athletes themselves will help the POC assess their medal potentials.

"After everybody is all accounted for, we will talk to them and ask them to give us the real picture," Hontiveros said. "We cannot just rely on the credentials they (athletes) gave us."

With the 31-65-67 medal count, the Philippines wound up fifth overall in Kuala Lumpur—the country's worst finish in the meet's six previous editions.

Malaysia emerged SEAG overall winner for the first time. Thailand came next, followed by Indonesia and Vietnam.

The POC expects the host country to figure even more prominently in the medal battles in the games to be held in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City.

The Philippines finished with a tally of only 20 gold, 26 silver and 41 bronze medals in 1999 but still salvaged fourth place.

Both the PSC and the POC are hoping the country will make a splash in Vietnam before the Philippines takes its turn to host the Games in 2005.

The country has never won the overall championship. It finished one gold shy of the title in the 1991 edition in Manila won by Indonesia with 92.

WHAT'S INSIDE

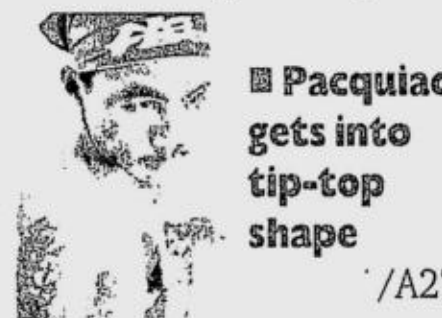
■ Qualifier makes US Open history

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Compiled by Lorenzo Manguiat

GOLF: Farmers Charity Classic; 11:30 a.m. (r) and 4 p.m.; Star Sports - Catch the first and second rounds of this tournament in Michigan.

LPGA Championship; 2 p.m.; ESPN - The best women's golfers try to survive and make the cut as the second round goes underway.

MOTOR SPORTS: F1 Mobil 1 French Grand Prix; 11 p.m. (r); Star Sports - Get another dose of adrenaline rush in this replay of the French Grand Prix.

CYCLING: Tour de France; 12 p.m. (r - 6:30 p.m.); ESPN - The best cyclists peddle their way to the top as Stage 3 continues in France.

BASKETBALL: Connecticut Sun vs Detroit Shock; 7:30 a.m. (r - 10 p.m.); Solar Sports - Connecticut clashes with Detroit in this WNBA Eastern Conference battle.

BILLIARDS: Asian 9-Ball Tour; 9 a.m. (r); Star Sports - Take a look back at quarterfinal action of the Manila leg.

TRACK AND FIELD: IAAF Golden League Highlights; 9 p.m.; Star Sports - The world's fastest men and women gather in France.

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GAME 4

Resurgent TNT seeks equalizer vs Coke

By June Navarro

TALK N' TEXT has regained its momentum but will not use it as a weapon to equalize with Coca-Cola in the championship series.

Instead, the Phone Pals will think of themselves as the oppressed rather than the oppressors in Game 4 of the Samsung-PBA All Filipino Cup Finals today at the Araneta Coliseum.

"I hope the team realizes that despite our win in Game 3, we're still down 1-2," said Talk N' Text coach Joel Banal.

"We somehow got the momentum back but we must not be too complacent and confident about it," he added, minutes after the Phone Pals skinned the Tigers, 67-59, to claim their first win in the series.

The Phone Pals will try to even up matters and reduce the series to a best-of-three affair in the game which starts at 7:30 p.m.

Banal said the attitude that the Tigers are always capable of demolishing the Phone Pals works best for his team at this time, now that both sides are halfway into the series.

"We all know how we lost in Game 1. I hope we'll always remember that we were beaten badly. In that way, we will always be scared of the Tigers," Banal explained.

GAMES TODAY (Araneta Coliseum)

5:00 p.m.—Alaska vs Shell (Invitational qualifying)

7:30 p.m.—Coca-Cola vs Talk N' Text (Game 4)

Game 1—Coke (83); TNT (79)

Game 2—Coke (92); TNT (89)

Game 3—TNT (67); Coke (59)

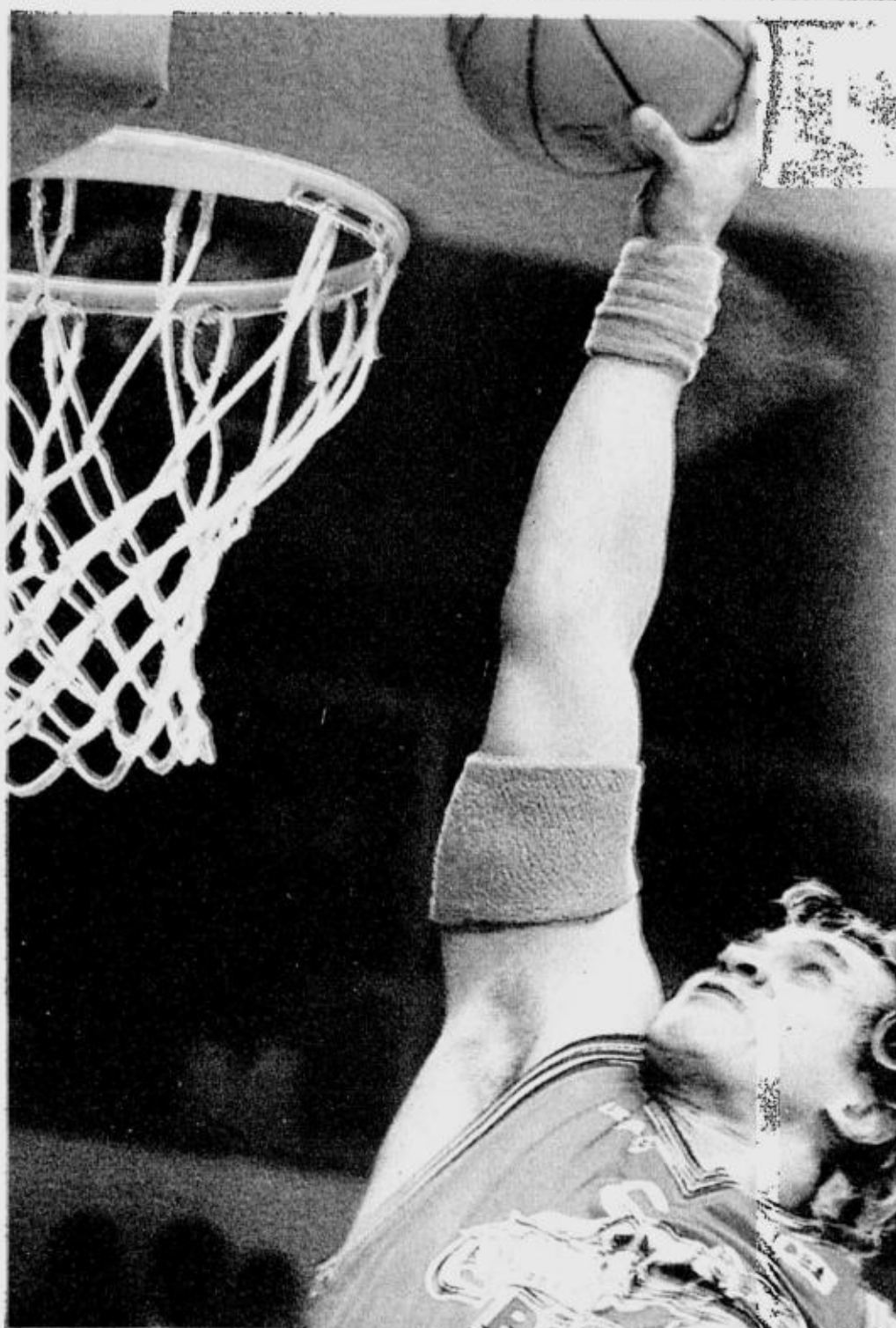
The Tigers blasted the Phone Pals, 93-79, in Game 1 and took a commanding 2-0 lead with a hard-fought 92-89 victory over Banal and his wards in Game 2.

On both occasions, the Tigers were far more superior because of their outside shooting, something the defending champions weren't able to do in Game 3.

"We couldn't shoot and that spelled the difference," said Coca-Cola coach Chot Reyes.

"We were also outrebounded for the first time in the series. If you don't shoot well and get outrebounded, you're bound to lose a game," he added.

The Phone Pals plucked more rebounds, 59-47, with Asi Taulava and Harvey Carey grabbing 15 and 17 rebounds, respectively.



TALK N' Text's man mountain Asi Taulava rose to the occasion in Game 3.

ERNEST S. SANTIAGO

Gonzales' court move unfortunate, says Eala

By Dennis U. Eroa

PHILIPPINE Basketball Association (PBA) commissioner Noli Eala last night termed as "unfortunate" Talk N' Text player Norman Gonzales' plea for injunction on his suspension by the league.

Eala said the move came at a time when the league was considering re-evaluating the case of the Talk N' Text power forward.

"It's unfortunate considering that hours before we learned about the suit, Talk N' Text had requested us to reconsider his (Gonzales') case," Eala told the INQUIRER. "We were told that he had undergone detoxification."

By filing a case for injunction and damages, Eala said the possibility of reopening Gonzales' case had been set back.

"This definitely does not help his case, in the PBA's point of view," Eala added. "We were leaning towards the reopening of his case."

Gonzales, through lawyer Efrén Hipolito Jr., filed the case last Friday before the Angeles City Regional Trial Court Branch 61.

Gonzales named the PBA and Eala as respondents.

The PBA meted the indefinite suspension on the 6-foot-3 Gonzales two months ago for failing the league's drug testing program.

In his petition, Hipolito said that "unless a restraining order is imposed as a pre-employment requirement, it will infringe on the constitutional rights of the player because compliance is not voluntary on his part, and it deprives him of his right to work or be employed."

Stags try to get back into the groove

GAMES TODAY (Rizal Coliseum)

11:30 a.m.—LSGH vs Letran (Jrs)

2:00 p.m.—CSB vs Letran (Srs)

4:00 p.m.—SSC-R vs PCU (Srs/Jrs)

DEFENDING champion San Sebastian College tries to recover lost ground today when it battles Philippine Christian University in the 79th NCAA basketball tournament at the Rizal Coliseum.

The University of Perpetual Help-Rizal Altas ambushed the Stags, 72-65, last Friday, pulling SSC to a 1-1 record in a tie with the Letran Knights and the Dolphins.

But Stags coach Turo Valenzona said it is still too early to push the panic button and that his men are still trying to jell as a team.

"I told you, they (Altas) are the team to beat. But it's still a long way to go. We will never know until the Final Four," said Valenzona.

Pep Moore, held scoreless in the previous outing, will seek to break out of his shell against the Dolphins, whose impressive man-zone defense enabled them to trip the College of St. Benilde

Blazers, 69-68, last week.

The Knights aim to sustain a 69-63 win over the San Beda Red Lions when they collide with the Blazers in the other senior match at 2 p.m.

Letran coach Louie Alas said the Knights would have to keep their errors at a manageable level if they entertain any thoughts of beating the Blazers.

June Navarro

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No special treatment for embattled Bryant

DENVER—Prosecutors say they are treating Los Angeles Lakers superstar Kobe Bryant like any other person suspected of sexual assault, although Eagle County sheriff's investigators did give him a day's warning that a warrant would be issued for his arrest.

"That treatment would not be accorded the average citizen," Robert Pugsley, a criminal law professor, said Monday.

"An arrest warrant is something you find out about when an officer knocks on your door at your home or anywhere."

The arrest warrant accuses the 24-year-old Bryant of attacking a woman at a resort in Eagle

County on June 30. District Attorney Mark Hurlbert said it could be days before he decides whether to file charges.

Defense attorney Pamela Mackey said Bryant "expects to be completely exonerated." She said the five-time All-Star had been in Colorado for knee surgery.

Probers spent nearly 30 hours on the case before contacting Bryant, police said.

A sheriff's spokeswoman said investigators told Bryant about the pending arrest warrant on Thursday. Bryant flew back to Colorado on Friday, surrendered to authorities and was released on \$25,000 bail.

AP



Remarkable success for Sunkist-PBL 2003 Unity Cup!

True to its vision of nurturing the talents and skills of young Filipino athletes, to become the finest, RFM's Sunkist sponsored the recently concluded Sunkist-PBL 2003 Unity Cup.

Last June, the nation witnessed one of the tightest Championship series. PBL has ever produced in recent years. The league's championship match

has never reached game 5 and has never been as action-packed to the last minute. In a breathtaking twist, Hapee Toothpaste outlasted Viva Mineral Water, 64-62, during the last 24 seconds of the final game. Allan Salangsang, Hapee Toothpaste's crusader, emerged as this season's Most Valuable Player.

For the past 20 years, the Philippine Basketball League (PBL) has proven itself to be the cradle

for many of the best cagers in the land. Today, it continues to give the Filipino youth the opportunity to enhance their skills and to build their basketball careers by providing a training ground that is both wholesome and competitive.

Now, that's a cause truly worthy of Sunkist's support. Once again, RFM has displayed its strong confidence in the Filipino athlete's capacity and potential to excel not only in the country but in the whole world. And as long as the Filipino youth continues to dream and to dare, RFM will never get tired of helping them achieve their goals.

Blazer guard held on 'grass' charge

PHOENIX—Trail Blazers' guard Damon Stoudamire was arrested on marijuana charges after allegedly trying to pass through an airport metal detector with almost 42 grams of the drug wrapped in aluminum foil.

Stoudamire was stopped at the Tucson airport Thursday as he prepared to board a flight to New Orleans, police said.

The team immediately suspended Stoudamire and fined him \$250,000.

He was charged with possession of marijuana and possession of drug paraphernalia, both misdemeanors.

AP

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PACQUIAO: Testing his skills against Japanese and Mexican sparmates.

Flashy Payla saves day for RP pugs



PAYLA: In round of 32.

BANGKOK—Violito Payla stopped his Ukrainian foe to reach the second round of the flyweight division Monday night and prevent a shutout for the RP Revicon Boxing Team in the World Amateur Boxing Championships at the Nimibutr Gymnasium here.

Payla halted Safulin Artom in the third round with a third-standing eight count for an RSC-CCL (Referee Stopped Contest-Compulsory Count Limit) verdict.

With the win, Payla set up a round-of-32 match against China's Zov Gang last night.

But luck eluded featherweight Joegen Ladon and welterweight Florencio Ferrer who both bowed out of the tournament.

Ladon, only in his third international tournament, absorbed a 27-18 decision from Frenchman Dangnoko Boubakar while Ferrer, who was impressive in his win over his rival from Brunei in the first round, was routed by Romanian champion Lon Dan, 26-8.

The two losses left only three other Filipinos in contention for medals.

The Filipinos' campaign in the championships was made possible by Revicon, with support from the Philippine Sports Commission, Family Rubbing Alcohol, Accel and Pacific Heights.

"I could not ask for more from Ladon and Ferrer. They tried their best but their foes were simply loaded with experience and guile," said head of delegation Manny Lopez, also president of the Amateur Boxing Association of the Philippines (ABAP) and secretary general of the Federation of Asian Amateur Boxing secretary general.

"But given more exposure to these kind of competitions, we could see these two following in the footsteps of Onyok and Roel (Velasco)."

Lerio started his campaign in the bantamweight division late last night against a South Korean.

Tanamor, who drew a first round bye in the light flyweight class, tangles with an Indonesian today.

Recah Trinidad is on leave. His column, Bare Eye, will resume next month.

By Salven L. Lagumbay
Contributor

LEAVING no stone unturned in his fourth title defense, reigning International Boxing Federation superbantam king Manny Pacquiao has tapped the help of sparmates from Los Angeles' Wild Card Gym to keep on his toes for the July 26 fight at the 6,200-capacity Grand Olympic Auditorium in California.

Rod Nazario, Pacquiao's business manager, told the INQUIRER on the phone from Los Angeles that his ward has been sparring against two Japanese fighters under the watchful eye of renowned trainer Freddie Roach.

"Just today, he did nine rounds against the Japanese," Nazario said.

Pacquiao, he said, will be in tip-top shape when he puts his title on the line against the Bronx-based Mexican Emmanuel "Carnecero" Lucero, who is

ranked No. 10 by the IBF.

Aside from sparring with the Japanese, Pacquiao is also expected to log in sessions with Mexican fighters training under Roach.

Prior to his US trip, the southpaw champ also sparred against big boys Rud 4K Kevkatche and his brother Bobby, the Philippine junior lightweight titlist.

The power-punching Pacquiao (36-2-1, 28 KO's) is expected to figure in a tough fight against Lucero (21-0-1, 12 KO's), the current WBC Continental America's superbantam titleholder.

The Pacquiao-Lucero tiff will serve as the main supporting bout to the Fernando Vargas (22-2, 20 KO's) versus Fitz Vanderpool (24-4-4, 13 KO's) showdown. RPN-9 will air both fights live on July 27.

Lunas defense slated Aug. 8

ROLLY Lunas defends his Paba flyweight crown against former champion Deeden Kengkaron of Thailand on Aug. 8 at the Mandaluyong City gymnasium. The 12-round fight is for the benefit of Filipino disabled boxers. A protégé of Mandaluyong Mayor Benhur Abalos, the 19-year-old Lunas has compiled a record of 14 wins (8 KO) and two losses. He wrestled the crown from Khunsuk Lokprabat of Thailand last May 29.

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Qualifier makes US Open history

Clutch birdie lifts Lunke to victory

NORTH PLAINS, Oregon— Hilary Lunke surprised everyone but herself, winning the US Women's Open with a 15-foot (4.6 meter) birdie putt on the 18th hole of a three-way playoff to become the first qualifier to capture women's golf most prestigious trophy.

After watching Angela Stanford make another clutch birdie on the final hole to tie for the lead, Lunke finished off a dramatic week at Pumpkin Ridge with a 15-footer that broke sharply to the left and fell into the cup.

She thrust her arms in the air and sobbed as she hugged her family.

Lunke always believed she had the game to win a US Women's Open, but that didn't make her journey any less amazing.

It began last month with an 80 in the first round of sectional qualifying. It ended Monday under sunny skies with an awesome short game that carried her to a 1-under 70 and a one-stroke victory over Stanford.

Kelly Robbins finished three strokes back at 73.

"I honestly believe that when I win my first LPGA event, it will be a US Open," Lunke had said Sunday evening after getting into the playoff.

No one can doubt her now.

She became the first player since Annika Sorenstam in 1995 to make

her first LPGA victory in the US Women's Open. And at age 24, Lunke became the youngest American to win a major championship in 16 years.

Lunke is no threat to replace Sorenstam as the best player in women's golf. She is short hitter, but that was no problem on the longest course (6,550 yards (5,987 meters)) in the 58-year history of the US Women's Open.

Not with her short game.

Lunke, who has a master's degree from Stanford University, could make a living giving putting lessons, and her wedge game was equally stout.

She hit only eight greens, hardly the recipe required for the US Women's Open. But whenever the pressure was at its peak, Lunke always answered with clutch putts. Her birdie on the 18th was the ninth putt she made from 5 feet or longer.

Robbins, a major champion with nine LPGA victories, had experience and momentum on her side after closing with a 69 on Sunday. She recovered from a bad start to get to within one shot, only to see her hopes end with a double bogey on the 13th hole.

Lunke looked as if she might take all the drama out of the first three-

way playoff at the US Women's Open since 1987. Despite relatively easy pin placements, all three women struggled at the start, only Lunke managed to thrive.

Jennifer Rosales of the Philippines had a final-day 73 and finished at 292 with six others.

Boosted by the \$56,500 (her fourth biggest paycheck since turning pro in 2000) she had won in placing 13th, Rosales moved up to 21st in the money list with total winnings of \$278,330 in 14 events.

Rosales takes the week off before heading to New York for the Sybase Big Apple Classic and then to Europe for two big events, the Evian Masters in France and the Weetabix British Masters — an event she almost won last year.

Final scores:
283—H. Lunke 71-69-68-75, A. Stanford 70-70-69-74, K. Robbins 74-69-71-69
284—A. Sorenstam 72-72-67-73
285—A. Song 70-73-68-74
286—J. Jang 73-69-69-75, M. McKay 66-70-75-75
287—J. Inkster 69-71-74-73
288—R. Jones 70-72-73-73
289—S. Petterson 76-69-69-75, G. Park 72-76-73-68
290—D. Andrews 69-72-72-77
292—N. Gulbis 73-69-72-78, R. Teske 71-73-72-76, L. Ochoa 71-75-72-74, P. Meunier-Lebouc 73-69-74-76, L. Diaz 71-71-74-76, C. Kerr 72-73-73-74, J. Rosales 74-69-76-73. With a report from Jong Arcano, AP, AFP

SPORTSWATCH

Alberto 4x4 champ

UP and coming 4x4 race organizer Larry Alberto topped the Shell Helix 4x4 Challenge at the jam-packed Payanig sa Pasig grounds in Pasig recently. The former military man known to many simply as "Ka Larry" posted the best times among 68 contenders in the Open/Expert category and bested 27 others in the All-Suzuki class to earn the distinction of being the best driver in the event. "Sinuwerte lang (I just got lucky)," said the Suzuki 4x4 Club of the Philippines president who drove a modified Land Cruiser in the Open class and a modified Suzuki Jimny in the All-Suzuki category. Mayor Joel Miranda of Santiago, Isabela was the first to post the so-called "time to beat" in the early golings of the competition.

Jody favored again

DEFENDING champion Jody Coseteng of Red Horse-San Miguel Beer-Caltex aims to move closer to an unprecedented fourth title when the SVI-Petron Grand Prix resumes with the 11th and 12th rounds at the Subic International Raceway on Sunday, July 13. Coseteng, who dominated eight of the previous 10 rounds with surprising ease, will set out as the heavy favorite anew in the centerpiece Blaze super saloon category. The multi-awarded campaigner has a 10-round aggregate of 86 points based on the 10-6-4-3-2-1 scoring system being used by the organizing Sports Values, Inc.

Pasargad XI shines

THE PASARGAD Football Club copped second spot in the 1st Samsung-United Football League by downing Nomads FC, 5-2 at home in Merville, Parañaque. Striker Andy Yates put the Nomads Brits one-up just five minutes into the game. A 19th minute strike by Mehrdad Chelemani evened the score at 1-1. Nigerian Ejike Collins gave Pasargad a 3-1 lead at the break. In the 85th minute, Ejike got his hat trick for the night and sent his team 4-1 up.

Lazaro chessfest on tap

THE 2003 Gov. Lazaro Chessfest (Search for Laguna Chess King & Queen) will be held on July 26 at the Robinson's Place in Sta. Rosa, Laguna. The event is divided into four categories: the King's Division (open), the Queen's Division (all female), the Juniors' Division (16-under), and the Kiddies' Division (12-under). Interested parties may contact the SCA secretary-general, at cell no. 0917-5015402, or at tel. (049) 837-8014.

RP woodpusher to US

IM Jayson Gonzales left yesterday to compete in various tournaments in the United States, culminating with the 2003 US Open Chess Championships set August 5-13 at the Radisson Hotel in Los Angeles, California. "This is part of my preparations for the SEA Games. There are many strong players there (US), and if I'm lucky I may even get a GM norm," said Gonzales, member of the Philippine rapid chess team bound for the 22nd SEA Games in Vietnam.

Lacson, pal top derby

DONG Lacson (Assassin Game Farm) and partner Kenny Limjico, fielding pure George Lay Roundheads, Left-Nose Hatch and Ray Hoskin Yellow-Legged McLeans fighters, sized by tallying a perfect five wins out of five matches in last Sunday's conclusion of Roligon Mega Cockpit's 293-entry "Hatawan sa Tag-ulan 5-Cock Derby." Lacson's Dreamcatcher entry is also in combination with Alex Carlos and Richard Ramos. It's now a back-to-back championship at Roligon for Lacson who also ruled last May's 260-entry Balikatan 2003. Both events were hosted by Rolly Ligon and exclusively sponsored by Thunderbird Power Feeds and Univet Agricultural Products.

All set for Rotary tilt

A 50-percent discount on airfare will be given by Cebu Pacific to the participants in the 17th Southern leg of the Rotary Golfing Fellowship Foundation of the Philippines, organizers announced yesterday. The golfist will be held at the Pueblo de Oro Golf and Country Club in Cagayan de Oro and the Del Monte Golf Club in Bukidnon on July 24-26 with July 22-23 as practice round. PLDT and Cebu Pacific are the major sponsors while Pryce Plaza is the official hotel, according to RGFFP chair Melito S. Salazar, RGFFP president and CEO Poch Borromeo and EVP and COO Albert Que. Interested parties may call tel. nos. 7218896/7210564 loc. 32 and fax no. 7215940 or the RC Cagayan de Oro coordinating club at tel. nos. (08822) 724827 or (088) 8567747.

Aussies grab Tour limelight

SEDAN, France— It couldn't get any better for Australians on this year's Tour de France—Brad McGee in yellow for the third night, Robbie McEwen in green for the second day and young Baden Cooke bagging his first stage to pull on the white jersey.

Cooke, a 24-year-old from Benalla who learned sprinting skills and rubbing shoulders in Australia's tough track cycling system, handed fdjeux.com their second win of this year's centenary race after McGee's prologue victory on Saturday.

On Monday the fdjeux.com teammates joined forces on the 204.5 km second stage to Sedan on the Belgian border to quench the Australian's thirst to get his name on the Tour's history list.

McGee retained his yellow jersey for a third day, despite coming under threat earlier in the race from McEwen, who



AUSTRALIAN riders Robbie McEwen, wearing the best sprinter's green jersey, Baden Cooke, winner of the day's stage, and overall leader Bradley McGee (left to right) jubilate after the second stage of the Tour de France.

came sixth behind Cooke in the sprint to keep hold of the green jersey he may now try to defend.

With McGee having won his first stage last year for the French team he joined in 1997, Cooke this year has

been manager Marc Madiot's sprinter of choice.

The blond-haired Victorian could hardly contain his joy after bursting past Frenchman Jean-Patrick Nazon, who came second, and experienced Estonian sprinter Jaan Kir-

sipuu.

"I can't believe it's happened," beamed Cooke, his eyes widening but his face going blank as he stared at McGee while they embraced.

Cooke's joy is easy to comprehend if you know his route—and what it means for a sprinter to win a stage on the world's biggest bike race.

Even before he teamed up with McGee last year, and after some testing times in Italy and Belgium, Cooke was already being tipped as the peloton's next big sprint talent—which he confirmed by scoring a number of top five finishes in his debut Tour.

Sometimes his determination to show that talent has got the better of him, and he has developed an unjust reputation as a troublemaker who causes crashes.

Scot David Millar admits the young Aussie gets a hard time of it.

Cameroon booter gets state funeral

YAOUNDE, Cameroon—

Cameroon marked the death of star

midfielder

Marc-Vivien Foe

on Monday

with a state funeral,

remembering the national hero who died

last month after collapsing mid-

match as an "adorable person."

About 12,000 people lined

the roads near Yaounde's main cathedral

to catch a glimpse of the

hearse carrying Foe's coffin, and

thousands more watched on national television.

President Paul Biya was among

the 100 congregated inside.

Eight pallbearers placed Foe's

flag-covered coffin at the altar

where many stepped forward to deliver eulogies.

"He was much more than a colleague or teammate. He was a

brother. We can't qualify this man

who has just left us," said the captain

of Cameroon's national team,

Rigobert Song.

Foe "was an adorable person

and adviser and supporter for me.

It will be so difficult to bear this

disappearance," Song said.

Foe was later buried on the outskirts

of town, near a sports complex

he was building to train

younger soccer players.

AFP



FOE

Pinoy chesser shines in US tourney

PHILIPPINE Executive Active Chess Express 2002 Chief organizer Manolito "Toto" Ferrer made the country proud anew by winning the title in the expert division of the 31st World Open Chess Championship, Monday night at the Adams

Mark Hotel in Philadelphia.

Ferrer, who also won the 1996 Chicago Open under 2000 category, scored 7.0 points in nine games to end up tied with Andrey Kozitsky of New York, Ananth Pappu of Ohio and Mehmet Ercan of Pennsylvania,

for 1st to 4th place.

Ferrer, a native of Baguio City, shared the total prize of \$18,700 with Kozitsky, Pappu and Ercan.

On the other hand, Milo Checkmate junior standout Emmanuel Emperado tied for 8th to 12th place after

notching 6.5 points.

Sharing 58th to 68th place was Florida-based Robert Lardizabal who scored 4.5 points while New Jersey-based Danilo Concepcion landed at 69th to 85th place with 4.0 points.

The legacy of Manolet Araneta

THE NAME Manolet Araneta may not ring a bell to the present generation of basketball fans, but to the oldtimers, the name Manolet Araneta will always be a source of national pride and inspiration. Manolet died on July 4 at the age of 76 after a lingering illness.

"Manolet is worth emulating, a worthy candidate

for enshrinement in the Basketball Hall of Fame," said Cesar Jota, one-time shooting star of San Beda College and Ysmael Steel. "He served the country well as a member of the national team in the 1948 London Olympic Games together with, among others, Hall of Famers Lauro Mumar, Pely and Gabby Fajardo, Ramonito Campos, Francisco Vestil and Pocholo Martinez."

Manolet Araneta marked his illustrious basketball career while playing for Philippine Airlines in 1947 when he was named Most Valuable Player of the first postwar MICA (Manila Industrial Commercial Association), forerunner of the Philippine Basketball Association.

For winning the MVP award, recalled

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo



the ageless Col. Julian Malonso, a former president of the Philippine Olympic Committee, Manolet received a Lord Elgin black dial wristwatch.

Born on Dec. 8, 1926 in Iloilo to Manuel Araneta and Rosario Ledesma, Manolet's upbringing was not particularly lowly. His family lived comfortably, earning enough money to last the rainy days. While his parents were residing at Negros Occidental, Manolet studied at Bago Elementary School where he started playing basketball at the town plaza. He continued playing the game before the outbreak of Pacific War as a member of Iloilo's Colegio de San Agustin team that also included the famous Hechano,

va brothers, Ramon and Paeng. During the Japanese occupation, Manolet joined the Mapua Tech high school squad which was considered really strong as it was composed of "imported players," among them George Reid, a sweet-shooting Japanese nisei, six-footer Max Frauendorf, a German-American cager, and Bill Spelivski, another six-foot player of Polish-American descent. Also in the powerhouse cast was tall and deadly Emilio "Miling" Rodriguez, a Negrense who would have been the other Carlos Loyza-ga had he survived the war.

Rodriguez was bayoneted to death by a Japanese soldier who was with the group that roamed the streets of Paco that also killed La Salle player Armando "Mandy" Eduque, elder brother of Tito Eduque, Manolet's teammate at La Salle in the late 1940s and until 1950.

Manolet and Tito Eduque had such incredible teamwork weaving across the court that they were called "sinulid at karayom." Manolet was a very fast guard and earned the moniker "Twinkle Toes." He was 24 years old when he married Mila

Cacho in 1950. They have eight children, all married now, and 14 grandchildren.

According to his daughter Christine, "Dad always had many stories to tell about his basketball days."

Reminiscing his happy days with Mapua Tech, Manolet said the high school team was so good that some of the players were integrated into the senior selection that competed in the intercollegiate championship.

"I remember my grandfather buying an entire box section at the Rizal Coliseum and filling it up with my cousins and friends to watch me play against Ateneo," he said. "I was a starter assigned to guard Ateneo star Simon LaO. In the first ten minutes, Ateneo took a 6-to-nothing lead, with LaO scoring all six points. After that, I was benched for the entire game," Manolet added good-naturedly.

After the war, he joined Far Easter University where he was team captain. From FEU, Manolet transferred to La Salle where he had a most satisfying stint having won several major national championships.

After his marriage in 1950, Manolet worked at the Bacolod Murcia Sugar Central in Negros Occidental where he continued his passion for sports, basketball in particular, by organizing inter-department tournaments at the sugar mills and promoting basketball and baseball games throughout the province. He always reminded the players that it's not the winning but competing and playing fair that is important in life. When Bago City celebrated its 100th anniversary, Manolet was honored as "Outstanding Son of Bago for Sports."

On March 1988 Manolet was found to be diabetic and had a lung operation, retiring in 1989 to his coffee farm in Baguio City. In November 1997 he underwent a colon cancer operation and received chemotherapy treatment in the United States for about a year. He won that battle against the Big C, but on December 2001, his kidneys malfunctioned due to the long years of being a diabetic.

Manolet Araneta, basketball star and gentleman, died last July 4. May he rest in peace.

ENTERTAINMENT

Vic Vargas still in coma; Sunshine goes home

By Marinel R. Cruz
and Jocelyn Valle,
Contributor

VETERAN actor Vic Vargas, who suffered a stroke last Thursday, is still in a coma at the intensive care unit (ICU) of the San Juan de Dios Hospital in Pasay City, according to his wife Rosanna Zamora.

"He needs your prayers," Zamora told INQUIRER Entertainment Monday night. But she admitted that Vargas (real name, Jose Maria Marfori Asuncion) has not been showing any response since he lapsed into a coma.

Vargas' wife made the appeal even as GMA 7 said that its young talent Sunshine Dizon has been released from the hospital four days after she was injured in a car accident in Mandaluyong City.

Vargas, 64, started showing signs of distress last Wednesday, and his condition worsened the following day, said Zamora.

His tongue stiffened, his speech slurred, he vomited and lost his balance, she said. Earlier, he was treated in a hospital in Subic for a typhoid-like ailment, but his family didn't think that was related to his condition now.

Vargas, an Architecture graduate of the University of Santo Tomas, had been a national judo champion and instructor on his own TV show on Channel 7 in the '60s when show business beckoned.

He was introduced in 1962's drama-action "Diegong Tabak," where he played the title role. He starred with Lolita Rodriguez.

He won the best actor award

for "El Vibora" at the 7th Manila Film Festival in 1972, and an Uri-an nomination for "In This Corner" in 1982.

Prior to his current hospitalization, he appeared on TV shows like "Maala-ala Mo Kaya," "Nagmamahal, Manay Gina" and "Kool Ka Lang."

GMA 7 talent Sunshine Dizon spent her 21st birthday last Thursday at the Cardinal Santos Memorial Medical Center in Greenhills, San Juan after her BMW car rammed into an electric post on Pioneer Street in Mandaluyong.

She was discharged from the hospital last Monday at 1 p.m., according to GMA 7 Artist Center manager Lou Gopez.

Dizon suffered a cut in the right knee, which required four stitches, Gopez had said in an earlier interview.

She added that Dizon was neither drunk nor high on drugs at the time of the accident.

Dizon had just come from the taping of the drama series "Kung Mawawala Ka" when the accident happened. There was a "small birthday party" for Dizon and another GMA employee that night, but Dizon did not drink any liquor, said Gopez.

On her way home to White Plains in Quezon City from the hospital, Dizon requested to be taken to the Antipolo Church in Rizal, said Gopez.

"Sunshine said she wanted to say her thanks because she had just survived an ordeal," Gopez told INQUIRER Entertainment. "Sunshine and company asked

VIC/A30

DID YOU KNOW...

Talk persists that ABS-CBN talk show host Boy Abunda will run for public office in his hometown in Borongan, Eastern Samar, where his mother is a

councilor. But Boy, who hosts "The Buzz," "Kontrobersyal" and "Private Conversations," said over the weekend that reports about his political

plans were just speculations on the part of his mother's supporters. He has also denied he would run for any election.



DIZON can now walk with a cane



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Join ka na sa celebration by helping MTV honor the very best in "Pinoy Video Making." Vote for your favorite nominees now!

Nominees...

Favorite New Artist

1. Nina - Jealous
2. Imago - Idlip
3. Sugarfree - Mariposa
4. Kamikaze - Lucky
5. Ayeen - Bawat Gabi

Favorite Group

1. Barbie's Cradle - All I Need
2. Imago - Idlip
3. Slapshock - Numb
4. Rivermaya - Wag Na Init Ulo Baby
5. Truefaith - Deadma

Favorite Male

1. Martin Nievera - Never Say Goodbye
2. Gary Valenciano - Warrior Is a Child
3. Ogie Alcasid - Sana
4. Ding Dong Avanzado - Here to Stay

Favorite Female

1. Regine Velasquez - Sa Aking Pag-Iisa
2. Nina - Jealous
3. Carol Banawa - Stay
4. Sharon Cuneta - In Your Eyes
5. Pops Fernandez - Kaya Pala

Favorite Song

1. Nina - Jealous
2. Imago - Idlip
3. Barbie's Cradle - All I Need
4. Rivermaya - Wag Na Init Ulo Baby
5. Regine Velasquez - Sa Aking Pag-Iisa

Vote for your favorite nominees.

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Once registered, to vote simply type MTVPILIPINAS-VOTE and send to 688. For OTHER subscribers via our website www.mtv.com or voting processes # 1, 2 or 3

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WEDNESDAY

rated prime nights

Starring Frankie Muniz **MALCOLM IN THE MIDDLE** 7:00PM

See who's coming over tonight! **Still Standing** 7:30PM

Starring Mark Addy

ENTERTAINMENT

Vic Vargas still in coma;
Sunshine goes home

VARGAS FILE PHOTO

From page A29

for the blessings of the priest."

Gopez said doctors had advised Dizon to rest for two weeks.

"Tita Doty (Sunshine's mother Dorothy Laforteza) said Sunshine is okay now," said Gopez. "She can now walk around the house with the help of a cane."

She said the stitches on Dizon's knee would be removed on July 17.

The mother of actor Polo Ravales joined Dizon and her mother on the trip to Antipolo. Ravales is Dizon's former boyfriend. He is now the boyfriend of young actress Alessandra de Rossi.

"But Polo was not with his mom, who is very close to Sunshine," Gopez explained.

In "Kung Mawawala Ka," Dizon plays Eddie Garcia and Hilda Koronel's feisty daughter Rosa Camilla. She is also in the sitcom "Daboy en da Girl" with Rudy Fernandez and Rosanna Roces.

Gopez said Dizon's mother is preparing a thanksgiving party.

About the same time last year, Dizon was hospitalized for three days reportedly due to a drug overdose. But Dizon denied the drug story, saying she had suffered from fatigue.

THE CYBORG WAR BEGINS TODAY
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TERMINATOR 3
RISE OF THE MACHINES

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Cinema 1 - 11:30, 1:50, 4:10, 6:30, 8:50
Cinema 4 - 12:10, 2:30, 4:50, 7:10, 9:30

GLORIETTA 4

Cinema 1 - 11:05, 1:35, 4:05, 6:35, 9:05
Cinema 3 (THX / GSC) - 11:40, 2:10, 4:40, 7:10, 9:40
Cinema 6 - 12:25, 2:55, 5:25, 7:55, 10:30

ALABANG TOWN CENTER

Cinema 1 (THX) - 11:50, 2:00, 4:10, 6:20, 8:30, 10:40
Cinema 2 - 1:20, 3:30, 5:40, 7:50, 10:00
Cinema 3 - 12:40, 2:50, 5:00, 7:10, 9:20

GREENBELT 1

ONSTAGE - 11:40, 2:05, 4:30, 6:55, 9:20

GREENBELT 3

Cinema 1 (THX / GSC) - 12:20, 2:45, 5:10, 7:35, 10:00
Cinema 2 (THX / GSC) - 1:00, 3:25, 5:50, 8:15, 10:40
Cinema 3 (GSC) - 6:30, 8:55, 11:20

Screening schedules are subject to change without prior notice.
MTRCB Rating: Parental Guidance 13 (PG-13)



AYALA CINEMAS



COLUMBIA PICTURES

Star ...

From page A31

prayer and relaxation techniques, and proceeds to the guided molding and fashioning of clay.

At the end of the workshop, participants' fashioned clay artworks will be brought to Ugu's place in Lusak, Quezon, for firing.

The high-end market for Ugu's prized pottery pieces includes resorts like Amanpulo, El Nido, and Punta Fuego, as well as Ayala Museum and some shops in Makati.

But the Art for Therapy workshop on July 12 goes beyond the creation of beautiful pottery pieces, and moves on to a more wholistic fusion of art, craft and life.

Ugu teaches pottery as he himself creates it, from a fusion of art and heart, and free-flowing imagination.

The Art as Therapy workshop is limited to 35 participants. Call the CCM Center at 705-1175 or 722-0016.

OPENS JULY 16 ONLY AT **ArtFilm** AYALA CINEMAS

A fresh and uniquely quirky romance redolent of a more indulgent cinema of yesteryear.

CHRISTINA RICCI is MIRANDA

also starring:
KYLE McCLACHLAN, JOHN SIMM & JOHN HURT

A small-town librarian (John Simm) falls head-over-heels with a beautiful stranger (Christina Ricci). She is secretly enmeshed in a darkly complex web of intrigue and deceit between her can artist-mentor (John Hurt) and a sleazy millionaire (Kyle MacLachlan). Seeking solace in the bright albeit naive embrace of her loopy new lover, but it's anybody's guess whether they'll emerge unscathed from this high-stakes game.

MTRCB Rating: **Restricted 18 (R-18)**

Miranda was screened at the 2002 Sundance Film Festival.

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Dancer in the Dark

In a world of shadows, she found the light of life.

Sol in rural America in 1954, an immigrant single mother who works at a factory takes refuge in song & dance, while her world slowly loses light.

"This is a film like no other this year, and for that alone you should see it."
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MTRCB Rating: Parental Guidance 13

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WEDNESDAY

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Exploring adolescence with humor and truthfulness.

See who's coming over tonight!

8:00PM RPN

Starring **Shiri Appleby** and **Jason Behr**

Star tracks

MAJOR stars' careers are particularly eventful this year, a sign that the local movie industry is slowly pulling out of the slump it's been in for some many years now.

Comedienne Ai Ai delas Alas has been hailed as the year's box-office queen due to the blockbuster business that her first starrer, "Ang Tanging Ina," has been enjoying. But the claim

has been countered by the backers of other popular female stars, who observe that box-office "queendom" shouldn't be based on only one hit, but on consistently good showing at the tills. If that's the right yardstick, they say, the rightful queen could be Judy Ann Santos or Regine Velasquez.

Last year's Metro Manila Film Festival was dominated by male action stars, but the 2003 edition this December has a distinctly female coloration. It could turn out to be a festival of comebacking actresses, with Susan Roces, Nora Aunor and Lolita Rodriguez set to star in major entries.

Susan's comeback vehicle,

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre



"Mano Po, 2," is turning out to be a controversial project because Lorna Tolentino and Dina Bonavie are "fighting" over a plum role in the movie, and some people are wondering why Maricel Soriano (one of the stars of the first "Mano Po" movie) isn't in the sequel. One reason could be because she's in the cast of Lolita's comeback film, "Filipinas," where she plays one of Lolita's daughters.

As for Nora Aunor, she's starring in a big dramatic project to be directed by Elwood Perez, who megged her in some noteworthy films. Elwood himself made his directorial comeback earlier this film season, after many years of inactivity.

Nora's comeback is particularly timely because some people have been spreading the rumor that the superstar is having money problems. They also wonder if she isn't over the hill as an actress. Well, her performance in her new movie will definitely answer that second quibble. As for the first, if her film turns out to be a hit, she'll be on easy street again.

We're confident that Nora's luck will continue to hold. She's always been able to bounce back after the periodic low points in her stellar career, and she can do it again. Fact is, she did exactly that earlier this year, when her "Gold" concert at the Araneta Coliseum defied the usual naysayers' dire prediction, and was avidly supported by her loyal followers.

Finally, the Metro filmfest is also shaping up as a festival of sequels, with updates on "Lastikman" and "Agimat" in the works, aside from the "Mano Po" sequel. And Dolphy is reported to be coming up with his own repeat starrer for the year-end filmfest.

Art as Therapy

On Saturday, July 12, the Center for Collaborative and Creative Ministry Foundation is holding an Art as Therapy workshop that will be handled by the acclaimed pottery artist, Ugu Bigyan, a good friend and supporter of the San Juan-based CCM Center.

Ugu has been a potter since 1986, and is much admired for his creative innovations in design, firing techniques and glaze formulations.

He will guide workshop participants in handling and giving free expression to clay to relax and release tension by redirecting it to creative pottery work.

The workshop starts at 8:30 a.m. and ends at 5 p.m. It commences with

STAR/A30

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THE HUNTED R13 11:50, 1:50, 3:50, 5:50, 7:50, 9:50	TERMINATOR: RISE OF THE MACHINES PG13 11:30, 2:00, 4:30, 7:00, 9:30	CHARLIE'S ANGELS: FULL THROTTLE PG13 12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40
TERMINATOR: RISE OF THE MACHINES PG13 1:00, 3:30, 6:00, 8:30	PIGLET'S BIG MOVIE - GP 12:50, 2:35, 4:20 DUMB & DUMBERER - PG13 6:00, 8:00	TERMINATOR: RISE OF THE MACHINES PG13 12:30, 3:00, 5:30, 8:00, 10:30

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Ali 1	HULK
Ali 2	28 DAYS LATER
Ali 3	TERMINATOR 3
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Ali 5	CHARLES ANGELS 2
Ali 6	DUMB & DUMBERER
Ali 7	THE HUNTED

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ODEON-2	BURIED AT BASA / KASIBULAN
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TANDEM-1	SUGAT
TANDEM-2	KATAYAN MO LANGIT KO
TIMES	SDV: LEGHORN DE PARRAIN

QUEZON CITY

ACT-1	SEXUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	ORIGINAL SIN
ACT-4	HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY
CORONET A	MGA BABAE SA VIP ROOM
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QUEZON-1	BERTUD NG PUTIK
REMAR	X-MEN 2
REMAR-2	BOLD STAR

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CINEMA-3	BIGLANG LIKO
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	TERMINATOR 3
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	THE HUNTED
CINEMA-6	HULK
CINEMA-7	ANG TANGING INA
CINEMA-8	MATRIX RELOADED
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	CHARLES ANGELS 2
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	TERMINATOR 3
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	TERMINATOR 3
CINEMA-12	TERMINATOR 3
CINEMA-14	28 DAYS LATER
CINEMA-15	DUMB & DUMBERER

LORES

CINEMA 2	SEXUAL ISLAND
CINEMA 3	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT

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CINEMA 1	UNWASSER FALLS
CINEMA 2	THE EYE
CINEMA 3	A MAN APART
CINEMA 4	THE MOTHER OF ALL THINGS

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3 THE HUNTED	3 DUMB & DUMBERER	3 TERMINATOR 3	3 HULK	3 TERMINATOR 3
4 TERMINATOR 3	4 28 DAYS LATER	4 THE HUNTED	4 THE HUNTED	4 CHARLIE'S ANGELS FULL THROTTLE
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4 THE HULK	4 DUMB & DUMBERER	4 DUMB & DUMBERER
5 CHARLIE'S ANGELS	5 28 DAYS LATER	5 28 DAYS LATER
6 CHARLIE'S ANGELS	6 THE HUNTED	6 THE HUNTED
7 MUNTING TINIG	7 DUMB & DUMBERER	7 DUMB & DUMBERER
8 DUMB & DUMBERER	8 CHARLIE'S ANGELS	8 CHARLIE'S ANGELS
9 PIGLET THE MOVIE	9 TUMITIBOK KUMIKIROT	9 TUMITIBOK KUMIKIROT
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 5 CHARLIE'S ANGELS
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6 CHARLIE'S ANGELS 2	6 TERMINATOR 3
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 3 TERMINATOR 3
 4 HULK
 5 TERMINATOR 3
 6 CHARLIE'S ANGELS 2
 7 CLOSED
 8 MGA MUNTING TINIG

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 1 TERMINATOR 3
 2 TERMINATOR 3
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 4 TUMITIBOK, KUMIKIROT
 5 MUNTING TINIG
 6 CHARLIE'S ANGELS 2

SM CITY MANILA 5239240
 1 CHARLIE'S ANGELS 2
 2 THE HUNTED
 3 28 DAYS LATER
 4 TERMINATOR 3
 5 DUMB & DUMBERER
 6 TERMINATOR 3
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 2 CHARLIE'S ANGELS 2
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 4 CHARLIE'S ANGELS 2
 5 THE HUNTED
 6 DUMB & DUMBERER
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 8 28 DAYS LATER
 9 HULK
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 2 HULK
 3 DUMB & DUMBERER
 4 CHARLIE'S ANGELS 2
 5 28 DAYS LATER
 6 TERMINATOR 3
 7 CHARLIE'S ANGELS 2
 8 TERMINATOR 3

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 1 TERMINATOR 3
 2 HULK
 3 TERMINATOR 3
 4 THE HUNTED
 5 CHARLIE'S ANGELS 2
 6 TERMINATOR 3

SM BICUTAN 776-3055
 1 TERMINATOR 3
 2 CHARLIE'S ANGELS 2
 3 THE HUNTED
 4 TERMINATOR 3

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 3 CHARLIE'S ANGELS 2
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2 TERMINATOR 3	2 28 DAYS LATER	2 TERMINATOR 3	2 TERMINATOR 3	2 TERMINATOR 3	2 SMALL VOICES	2 TERMINATOR 3	2 THE HUNTED	2 CHARLIE'S ANGELS	2 CHARLIE'S ANGELS
3 CHARLIE'S ANGELS	3 DUMB & DUMBERER	3 TERMINATOR 3	3 HULK	3 HULK	3 SOUL KEEPER	3 CHARLIE'S ANGELS	3 THE HUNTED	3 THE HUNTED	3 KAPIT BAHAY
4 CHARLIE'S ANGELS	4 TERMINATOR 3	4 THE HUNTED	4 DUMB & DUMBERER	4 CHARLIE'S ANGELS	4 TUMITIBOK, KUMIKIROT	4 CHARLIE'S ANGELS	4 MGA BABAE SA VIP ROOM	4 TERMINATOR 3	4 THE GURU
5 TERMINATOR 3	5 THE HUNTED	5 DUMB & DUMBERER	5 TERMINATOR 3	5 TERMINATOR 3	5 MGA BABAE SA VIP ROOM	5 MGA BABAE SA VIP ROOM	5 MGA BABAE SA VIP ROOM	5 SMALL VOICES	5 SMALL VOICES
6 TERMINATOR 3	6 HULK	6 TERMINATOR 3	6 TERMINATOR 3	6 CHARLIE'S ANGELS	6 REAL CANCUN	6 TERMINATOR 3	6 TERMINATOR 3	6 BALIKATAN	6 BALIKATAN
7 HULK	7 THE HUNTED	7 DUMB & DUMBERER	7 TERMINATOR 3	7 TERMINATOR 3	7 CHARLIE'S ANGELS	7 TERMINATOR 3	7 TERMINATOR 3	7 TERMINATOR 3	7 TERMINATOR 3
8 THE HUNTED	8 DUMB & DUMBERER	8 CHARLIE'S ANGELS	8 TERMINATOR 3	8 TERMINATOR 3	8 CHARLIE'S ANGELS	8 TERMINATOR 3	8 TERMINATOR 3	8 TERMINATOR 3	8 TERMINATOR 3
9 DUMB & DUMBERER	9 28 DAYS LATER	9 CHARLIE'S ANGELS	9 TERMINATOR 3	9 TERMINATOR 3	9 CHARLIE'S ANGELS	9 TERMINATOR 3	9 TERMINATOR 3	9 TERMINATOR 3	9 TERMINATOR 3
10 28 DAYS LATER	10 CHARLIE'S ANGELS	10 CHARLIE'S ANGELS	10 TERMINATOR 3	10 TERMINATOR 3	10 CHARLIE'S ANGELS	10 TERMINATOR 3	10 TERMINATOR 3	10 TERMINATOR 3	10 TERMINATOR 3

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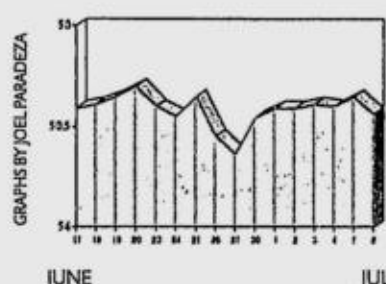
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Forex reserves dip to \$15.87B in May

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₱ 53.44 = \$

As of 5 p.m., July 8, 2003

₱ 118.22 = \$

As of 5 p.m., July 8, 2003

GOLD: \$347.25-347.75

per ounce Hong Kong, July 8, 2003

STOCK MARKET

Stocks rise on improved liquidity



SHARE prices closed 1.02 percent higher to a new 13-month peak yesterday in line with a sharp rally on Wall Street, dealers said.

"Sentiment has remained generally positive," said Terence Chan of Citisecon-line.com.

The Philippine Stock Exchange composite index rose 13.20 points to 1,302.22—its highest level since June 6, 2002, when it hit 1,302.68 points.

Turnover volume fell to 1.01 billion shares but value rose to P726.69 million compared with 1.62 billion shares worth P631.73 million on Monday.

Gainers outnumbered decliners 53 to 21, with 44 stocks unchanged.

Dealers said the 1.62-percent rise of the Dow Jones Industrial Average in New York on Monday boosted buying in the local stock market.

The index was pushed to a new 13-month high for the second straight day despite negative Philippine export data and higher inflation figures released last week.

Chan said the rally "has been further boosted by the continuous decline in Treasury bill rates." The 91-day treasury bill average dropped to 5.33 percent at the weekly auction on Monday after the central bank

STOCKS/B3

INTEREST RATES

July 08, 2003-MART1

Rates

Benchmark

Interest

Rates

1 Month

3 Months

6 Months

1 Year

2 Years

3 Years

4 Years

5 Years

7 Years

10 Years

20 Years

25 Years

MART1

8-Jul-03

6.27

6.4346

7.1767

7.8696

8.7679

9.6367

10.0467

10.2917

11.1517

11.4633

12.01

12.3883

MART1

7-Jul-03

6.2429

6.4154

7.25

7.9567

8.75

9.645

10.0333

10.295

11.135

11.47

12.0233

12.3783

SOURCE: MART/BLOOMBERG

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE COUNTRY'S foreign exchange reserves dropped to its lowest level this year at \$15.87 billion as of end-June, down \$205 million from \$16.07 billion the previous month after the government settled some maturing obligations.

Contrary to an earlier statement of Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Rafael Buenaventura that there were no repayments in June, the central bank said the national government as well as the BSP actually repaid some loans last month.

Sources earlier said the gross international reserves had dropped to \$15.5 billion in June, but the central bank denied this last week. Buenaventura even assured that the reserves likely remained at \$16 billion in June.

"The decline in reserves during the period was due mainly to the drawdowns for the debt service requirements of the national government and the BSP," the central bank

chief said in a statement yesterday.

The level of dollar reserves in June was the lowest since the \$15.75 billion in November. Buenaventura said the GIR should stay within \$14-\$15 billion this year as maturing debts reduce the dollar reserves lodged in the central bank's vaults.

With the drop in the GIR, the country's net international reserves, an indicator monitored by the International Monetary Fund, also slid to \$12.35 billion in June from \$12.52 billion in May.

The GIR is a closely watched indicator among financial markets showing the extent of the country's dollar war chest. The net reserves are derived when total liabilities of

the central bank including gold used as collateral for loans are subtracted from the GIR.

Despite the decline, Buenaventura said the level of reserves in June could pay for 4.4 months' worth of imports of goods and services. The level is also equivalent to 2.5 times the country's short-term debts based on original maturity and 1.3 times based on original maturity.

A strong GIR helps strengthen or at least stabilize the peso as it tells the market that the central bank has sufficient dollars to augment demand in the spot market.

The peso weakened slightly to 53.44 to \$1 yesterday from 53.35 on Monday.

A healthy level of foreign exchange also assures the country's trading partners that it could pay debts and importation, thus an important factor in boosting confidence of foreign investors and creditors.

Comprised mainly of US dollars,

the GIR is the total foreign currency holdings of the central bank including gold and special drawing rights, the currency used by the International Monetary Fund.

While substantially higher from its level during the Asian crisis when the GIR slid to less than \$10 billion, the Philippines' reserves are modest compared to about \$40 billion of Thailand and some \$200 billion of Japan.

A crucial issue in determining the extent of dollar reserves this year would be the government's foreign borrowing program.

The Department of Finance had slashed its remaining \$900-million foreign financing requirement by \$500 million after the government raised P74.31 billion from the sale of three-and-five year retail treasury bonds. The proceeds from the RTB sales were equivalent to \$1.38 billion, enough for the government to forego its remaining offshore requirement.

Moody's downgrade of gov't credit rating expected this year

MOODY'S Investors Service is expected to downgrade its rating on Philippine foreign debts within the year in line with the assessment of Standard & Poor's and Fitch Ratings that political uncertainty poses the greatest downside risk to the country's sovereign marks.

Financial markets believed that President Macapagal-Arroyo's decision in January not to run for reelection "injected a degree of uncertainty" to the country's prospects of putting in place important reforms.

The expected downgrade from Moody's may take place despite the government's recent success in containing the budget deficit below the monthly ceilings in April and May. The fiscal gap in June is also likely to stay below the target of P15 billion due to continued healthy collections and prudent spending.

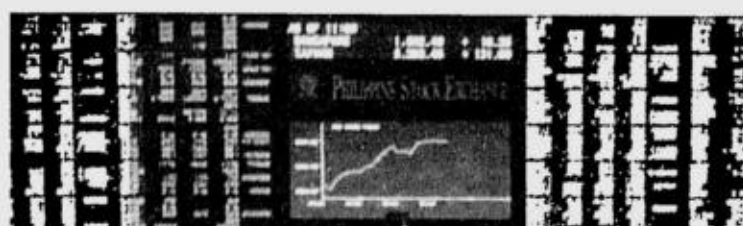
HSBC, in its latest economic assessment of the Philippines

prospects, said that its own rating for the country was now in line with that of S&P and Fitch. Both downgraded their ratings on Philippine sovereign debts a notch lower to "BB" from "BB plus" during the first half.

"Moody's Ba1 stable rating for the Philippines, however, cannot be justified by the fundamentals. Hence, we expect a downward adjustment in the second half of 2003," HSBC said in its regional monthly update called "The View."

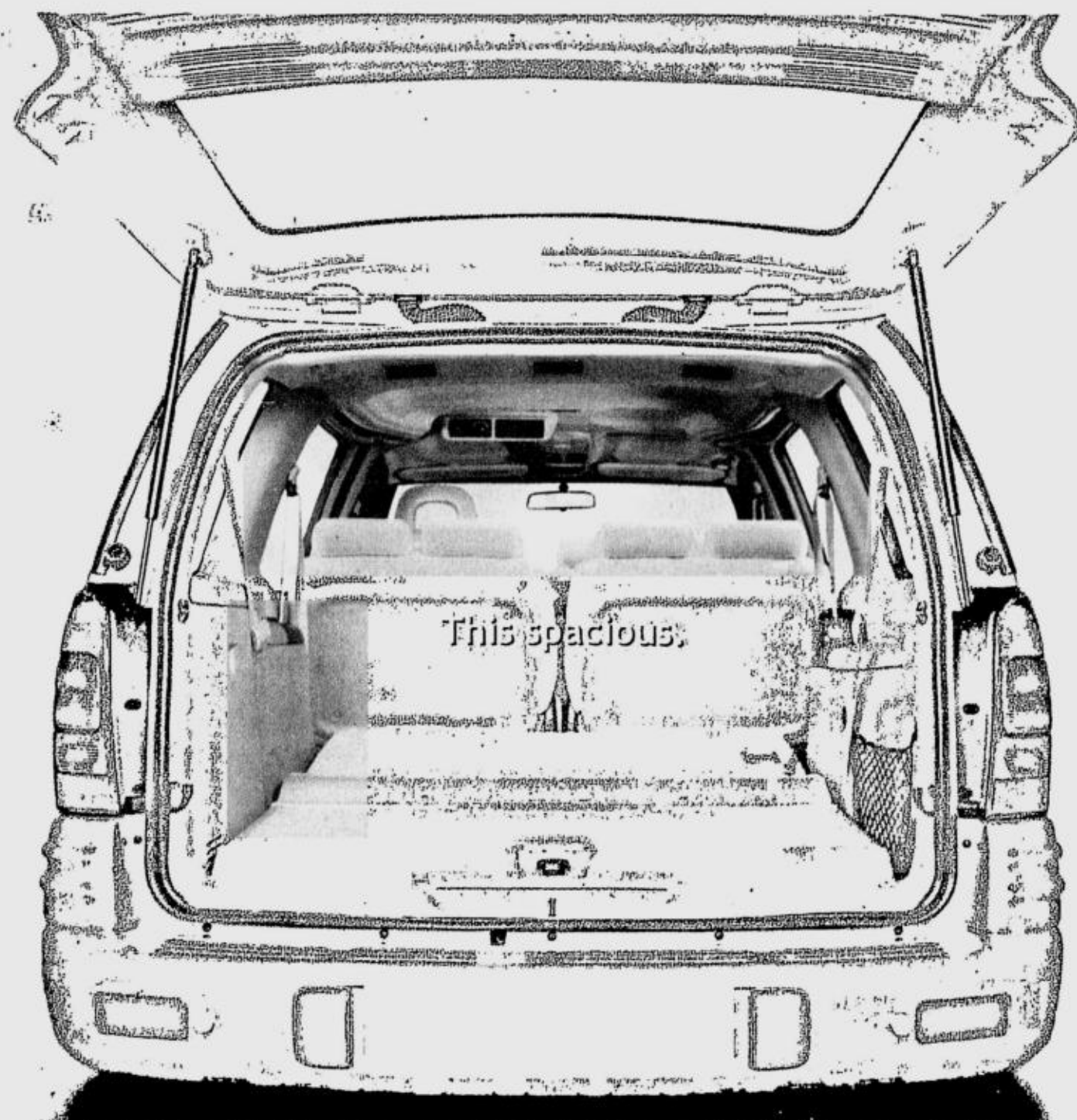
HSBC said that in December, it warned that the negative outlook of S&P and Fitch on the Philippines strongly suggested a ratings downgrade within the next 12 months. Indeed, S&P handed a downgrade in April and Fitch in June.

Government officials, however, said that Moody's had not given any indication on any rating action and any assessment of other private groups was simply speculation. Clarissa S. Batino



TRADERS at the Philippine Stock Exchange wrap up the day shortly after the closing bell. The PSE composite index closed higher yesterday to a new 13-month peak Tuesday with investors upbeat on the domestic economic outlook over the balance of the year.

AFP



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MWSS to tap \$190-M 7-yr loan

By Clarissa S. Batino

METROPOLITAN Waterworks and Sewerage System is set to tap a \$190-million five-to seven-year loan from offshore markets in August to be handled by Bridge Banc which, according to its website, is a direct cash flow lender or alternative source of funds to traditional institutional financing firms.

The borrowing has yet to be approved by the policy-making Monetary Board of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas with the underwriter still subject to due diligence by the Department of Finance.

MWSS chief finance officer Estrellito Poloso said the water agency would use \$100 million of the proceeds for the settlement of a one-year loan with Deutsche Bank which is

falling due in August.

The remaining \$90 million will be used to pay part of the P6 billion in maturing debts that should have been absorbed by Maynilad Water Services Inc.

Poloso said since there was an ongoing arbitration case between MWSS and Maynilad, the state entity would have to shoulder the liabilities.

Maynilad, a joint venture between the Lopez group and French firm Ondeo Phils., had stopped paying concessions fees and filed for the early termination of its concession agreement with the MWSS.

Poloso said Bridge Banc was chosen to handle the loan over other investment banks because it had offered the most attractive rate to the MWSS.

Bridge Banc is not among the regulated en-

tities by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp., according to sources.

Since the MWSS loan would carry a full sovereign guarantee, the finance department has the prerogative to overrule the selection of the underwriter to preserve the integrity of the borrowing.

The government had asked Bridge Banc to submit financial records last week but the group has yet to comply with the request to date.

The MWSS cannot not seek the Monetary Board's approval while the issue on the underwriter is pending.

A government source was puzzled why Bridge Banc was invited to submit a proposal and eventually won the underwriting deal when it was not even included in the state's list of qualified financial groups.



INTERNATIONAL Monetary Fund (IMF) assistant director for Asia-Pacific Charles Adams (left) chats with South Korean deputy prime minister and finance and economic minister Kim Jin-Pyo (C) and Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho (right) during a break at the recent 5th ASEM Finance Ministers Meeting at Bali Sheraton International Convention Center, in Nusa Dua Bali. Asian and European finance ministers forecast a pick-up in world economic growth soon as the fallout from war, terrorism and SARS eases, in a draft statement due for official release later today.

AFP

ERC move boosts Cebu business

CEBU City businessmen recently said they were optimistic that a move by the Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC) to compel National Power Corp. to implement adjusted rates for the Visayan region could help stave off "a parallel investment crisis in Cebu City."

The Cebu business community welcomed the ERC move allowing Napocor to charge the P2.2412 per kilowatt-hour generation rate adjustment mechanism (GRAM) in a bid to prevent a power crisis in Cebu City.

ERC Chair Manuel Sanchez announced the move last week after independent power producer Cebu Private Power Corp. postponed its scheduled shutting down of operations to July 25, from June 15, in response to the local business community's call. CPPC earlier informed power distributor Visayan Electric Company (Veco) that it could no longer continue operating due to substantial financial losses.

CPPC earlier said the cap imposed by the government on Napocor's Fuel Purchase Cost Adjustment (FPCA) rate caused a 20-percent reduction in the Napocor reference rate. Since CPPC sells power to Veco at 2 percent lower than the reference rate, it said it could no longer meet its operating costs.

According to Sanchez, once Napocor starts charging GRAM, CPPC can adjust its selling price to Veco to more reasonable levels.

Safeway putting up IT subsidiary in RP

By Michelle V. Remo

SAFeway Inc., one of the major food and drug retailers in North America, is set to put up an information and technology subsidiary in the country.

The subsidiary, called Safeway Philtec Inc., will focus on software development, maintenance and support. It will be put up at the RCBC Plaza in Makati and will be inaugurated on July 16. The company is expected to hire more than 200 local IT professionals for the initial phase of the business.

The entry of Safeway Inc., which is one of Fortune's Top 500 corporations, into the Philippine market boosts the country's chance

of becoming one of the preferred international sites for IT investments.

According to Safeway Philtec's vice president for IT Enrico Redona, the company's decision to invest in the Philippines was based on its confidence in the country's "talents" and "reliable business environment" for the IT industry.

"We will leverage on the viability of the Philippines as an offshore provider of IT and IT services to further streamline Safeway's IT operations, reduce costs, increase efficiencies and preserve commitment to excellent customer service," said Redona.

Aside from the IT subsidiary, Safeway Inc. is also expected to put up a call center facility in the country by the end of the year.

The promotion of the country's business climate for the IT industry was aided by the results of the 2002 Global Economy Index Survey done by the international IT think tank and consulting firm Meta Group.

Meta Group has upgraded the country's IT climate to a C1 ranking, or two notches higher than its former D ranking. C1 indicates that the country's IT industry is "developing with high potential for rapid evolution."

Roxas said the upgrade augurs well for the country's strategy to develop its IT investment climate which involves bringing in major out-sourcers, attracting branded clients and building the confidence of existing players and customers.

RP, Vietnam OK doubling of flag carriers' capacity

By Abigail L. Ho

THE PHILIPPINES and Vietnam last week agreed to double the weekly seat entitlements of their respective flag carriers serving Manila-Ho Chi Minh route. They, at the same time, gave each other unlimited seats to other destinations.

A government source yesterday said the seat entitlement for the Manila-Ho Chi Minh route had been jacked up to 2,000 seats per week from only 1,000.

He also said that from 250 seats per week, both countries' flag carriers could now enjoy unlimited seating capacity for the Manila-Hanoi route.

The two flag carriers also opened other destinations—including Cebu and Clark in the Philippines and Danang in Vietnam. For these new destinations, Philippine and Vietnamese flag carriers will also have unlimited

passenger capacities.

"They also agreed to give each other one roving point each. For Vietnam, it can choose Davao, Zamboanga, Laoag or any other gateway," the source said.

The Vietnamese government had expressed interest in increasing seat entitlements to the Philippines early this year. The government source said the Philippine air panel also saw a good opportunity in increasing capacity with Vietnam because of its good tourism numbers.

He said Vietnam, though quite lacking in infrastructure, still edged out the Philippines in terms of tourist arrivals with more than 2 million a year compared with the country's around 1.8 million.

"The opportunities are there. We'll have more opportunities to bring in tourists going to Vietnam to the Philippines," he said.

Gov't to seek tariff increases

THE GOVERNMENT will seek an increase in the country's tariffs to 2000 levels, concretizing its recent pronouncement of taking "minimum compliance" to liberalization.

This position will be raised by the government in the 5th Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization in September.

Ramon Vicente Kabigting, director of the Bureau of International Trade Relations, said in a recent forum on WTO that initial negotiating positions taken at the technical committee level included the raising of tariffs to year 2000 rates.

The government specifically proposes that the average tariff rate of 6.08 percent since January of this year be raised to 16 percent, which is the average tariff rate in 2000.

A government official said in an interview that the proposal would mean tariff increases on various agricultural and industrial products.

Michelle V. Remo

Philippine Stock Exchange

(As of Tuesday, July 8, 2003)					
STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Aseistaro Dev. Bank Inc.	4.35	4.35	4.35	4.35	5,000
Banco do Oro Univ. Bank	19.5	19.5	19.25	19.5	296,000
Bank of the Phil. Islands	49	49.5	48.5	49.5	889,000
China Banking Corp.	750	750	750	750	8,140
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	36	36	35	35	80,400
First E-Bank Corp.	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	10,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	32	32	31.5	31.5	254,500
Philippine National Bank	27	28	27	27	117,900
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	14	15.5	14	14.5	59,700
Security Bank Corp.	18	19	17.25	17.75	383,700
Union Bank of the Phil.	21.5	22	21.5	21.75	230,800
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Bankard Inc.	1.36	1.36	1.36	1.36	90,000
Philippine Fund Inc.	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	8,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1480	1500	1480	1500	1,190
Sun Life Financial Serv.	1115	1115	1110	1110	4,130
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	22.5	23.25	22.5	22.5	99,000
Diversified Fin. Network	2.24	2.24	2.1	2.12	75,000
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.73	0.76	0.73	0.73	6,580,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	695	710	690	705	48,070
People Inc.	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	9,500,000
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.045	0.047	0.045	0.046	2,400,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.027	0.027	0.026	0.027	2,400,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	5,000
Philippine Tel. Corp.	0.48	0.5	0.48	0.5	28,860,000
Phil. Telegraph & Tel. Co.	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	50,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	595	595	585	590	2,580,000
Intanage Corp.	0.44	0.47	0.44	0.47	2,580,000
Philweb Corp.	0.015	0.015	0.014	0.015	229,300,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	12.5	13.25	12.5	12.75	2,257,900
Manila Electric Co. B	18.5	19.25	18.5	18.75	3,377,800
Petron Corp.	2.1	2.12	2.06	2.06	7,440,000
Salcom Power Corp.	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	30,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.48	1.48	1.48	1.48	965,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	2.95	2.95	2.9	2.9	8,588,000
Negros Navigation Co. Inc.	0.52	0.54	0.52	0.54	266,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.47	0.47	0.47	0.47	200,000
Union Cement Corp.	0.8	0.85	0.8	0.85	120,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	2.85	2.9	2.85	2.85	170,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	31	31	30.5	30.5	85,500
Jollibee Foods Corp.	17.75	18	17.75	17.75	181,600
RFM Corp.	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	260,000
Swift Food Inc.	0.32	0.32	0.3	0.31	420,000
San Miguel Corp. A	53.5	54	53.5	54	76,400
San Miguel Corp. B	63	63.5	63	63.5	100,000
Universal Robina Corp.	5.3	5.8	5.3	5.8	100,000
Vitacorn Corp.	0.24	0.24	0.235	0.24	230,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	20,000
Ayala Corp.	4.85	4.9	4.8	4.85	22,768,000
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.14	0.16	0.14	0.16	440,000
Abotit Equity Ventures	2.46	2.46	2.44	2.46	298,000
Aic Net Holdings Inc.	0.034	0.034	0.032	0.032	7,400,000
A Soriano Corp.	0.64	0.64	0.64	0.64	3,800,000
APC Group Inc.	0.0775	0.08	0.0775	0.08	35,000,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	35,000,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	1.74	1.74	1.68	1.72	117,000
Balabac Resources & Hldgs	0.135	0.135	0.135	0.135	300,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	33,000
Benpras Holdings Corp.	0.64	0.66	0.61	0.63	24,320,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.09	0.09	0.09	0.09	100,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.2	0.205	0.2	0.2	900,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.235	0.24	0.235	0.235	2,720,000
FI-Estate Corp.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	20,000
Fininvest Dev. Corp.	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	1,125,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	16	16.25	15.5	15.5	1,804,900
Global Equities Inc.	0.09	0.095	0.085	0.09	6,200,000
Ionics Inc.	0.83	0.89	0.83	0.88	1,090,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. A	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	1,000,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.79	0.8	0.77	0.77	2,390,000
Manubay Holdings Corp.	0.12	0.135	0.12	0.13	700,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.37	0.37	0.34	0.34	18,260,000
Musica Corp.	0.36	0.37	0.36	0.36	10,680,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.17	0.18	0.15	0.15	700,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	0.98	0.98	0.98	0.98	50,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.3	0.31	0.3	0.31	400,000
Unwired Holdings Inc.	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.06	400,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	50,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Euro-Med Lab. Phil. Inc.	3.15	3.15	3.15	3.15	2,000
Metro Alliance Hldgs B	1	1	1	1	80,000
Manubay Vinyl Corp.	1.52	1.6	1.5	1.6	95,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	15.75	15.75	15.5	15.75	101,900
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	0.61	0.63	0.61	0.63	8,440,000
Farmont Holdings Inc.	0.37	0.37	0.37	0.37	60,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	0.42	0.43	0.42	0.43	670,000
Mondragon Intl Phils. Inc.	0.25	0.28	0.25	0.28	20,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.39	0.39	0.39	0.39	100,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	22.75	23	22.25	22.5	1,681,300
PLDT (10% Pref) Series P	10	10	10	10	4,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10	10	10	10	5,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Z	10	10	10	10	5,000
Philweb Corp. - Warrants	0.0026	0.0028	0.0026	0.0026	84,000,000
OTHERS					
Centro Escolar University	5.2	5.2	5.2	5.2	30,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	6.4	6.6	6.4	6.5	9,979,000
Araneta Properties Inc.	0.26	0.26	0.25	0.25	270,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.24	0.24	0.235	0.235	1,180,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.22	0.22	0.2	0.2	6,850,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.27	0.28	0.26	0.26	34,190,000
Fininvest Land Inc.	1.24	1.26	1.18	1.2	26,225,000
Highlands Prime Inc.	2.2	2.24	2.2	2.24	592,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.16	0.16	0.145	0.145	2,840,000
FI-Estate Land Inc.	0.23	0.24	0.23	0.23	1,150,000
Primmex Corp.	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4	29,000
SM Development Corp.	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	6,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	6.2	6.3	6.1	6.1	3,496,000
MINING					
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	500,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.0028	0.0028	0.0028	0.0028	4,000,000
Omico Corp.	0.004	0.004	0.0038	0.0038	123,000,000
Phil Mining Corp. A	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	600,000
Phil Mining Corp. B	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	20,000
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05	100,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.013	0.014	0.013	0.013	17,500,000
Imperial Res.	0.0034	0.0034	0.0034	0.0034	8,000,000
Imperial Res. B	0.0032	0.0036	0.0032	0.0036	17,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0034	0.0036	0.0034	0.0034	89,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0034	0.0034	0.0034	0.0034	96,000,000
Pacific	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	20,000,000
Sinophill Corp.	0.032	0.034	0.032	0.034	20,000,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.16	0.2	0.16	0.2	330,000

Lowdown on Lhuillier

DO not be surprised if you hear shouts and heated exchanges when you visit the Philippine Embassy in Rome.

It is most probably Ambassador Philippe Lhuillier and his wife and the career officers simply doing their anger management routine.

The manager of LandBank, Jaime Figueras, and the manager of BPI, Arturo Pedregosa, were the most recent shocked witnesses to this undiplomatic behavior, which happened right after the June 12 vin d'honneur celebration.

Details of the June 12 and similar outbursts are contained in sworn affidavits submitted by Consul Kira Christianne Danganan, administrative officer Belen Zurbito, foreign service officer Erlinda Sesante, and attachés Jose Mari Fedelicio and Glea Saunar to the Department of Foreign Affairs and Malacañang.

The career officers have asked the home office: to either recall Lhuillier or transfer the career officers out of Rome.

Lhuillier is now back in Manila, apparently trying to put out the fire, the second mutiny to erupt under his watch at the Quirinale in so many years.

An appointee of Estrada, the Cebuano jewelry importer-pawnshop magnate bounced back and managed to beat off a recall order issued in April 2001 by then Foreign Secretary Teofisto Guingona Jr. Guingona issued the recall order after Malacañang informed him that President Arroyo had already accepted Lhuillier's resignation.

A year ago, a more senior set of DFA officers staged a similar mutiny in the Rome embassy. The home office managed to hush up the incident, and, to buy peace, instead transferred Minister Antonio Curameng, Consul General Eleanor Jaucian and consul Margarita Silvestre-Ibayan out of Lhuillier's reach.

One cause for last year's mutiny, according to the diplomatic grapevine, is under whose names the four luxury vehicles, including a Jaguar S, acquired by the ambassador would be placed.

Acknowledging that the situation this time have turned for the worse, DFA Manila recently dispatched a female chargé d'affaires to sort things out in Rome and submit an investigation report/recommendation to Padre Faura and Malacañang.

The diplomatic troubleshooter, it turns out, is a sister-in-law of a brother of Favorite Publisher.

Let us see now. Lhuillier just last week invited GMA's Favorite Publisher to a Roman holiday, gave him, among other things, a uniformed chauffeur and a protocol officer and a Mercedes Benz E220 as touring car.

The Merc is an improvement over the Jaguar S that Lhuillier lent Favorite Publisher the year before.

Draw your own conclusion.

Cement manufacturers' group allays fears of price manipulation

PHILIPPINE Cement Manufacturers Corp. counsel Edcel C. Lagman has assured the Department of Trade and Industry that there was no cement price manipulation in the market.

Lagman made the statement in reaction to Trade and Industry Secretary Manuel Roxas II's announcement that his department would be monitoring cement prices nationwide.

In the meantime, fair trade advocate and former Senator Wigberto "Bobby" Tañada yesterday said the recent imposition of a definitive safeguard tariff on imported cement demonstrated a strong political will on the part of the government, which was a positive signal to local industries beleaguered by the flood of imports.

"The imposition of definitive safeguards on imported cement is a win-win for all—the government, consumers, industry, workers and the local communities," said Tañada, lead

convenor of the Fair Trade Alliance (FTA).

Tañada was referring to the P20.60-a-bag additional tariff imposed by Roxas on imported cement as a definitive measure to shield the local cement industry from the impact of cement import surges and dumping.

Roxas imposed the tariff following a decision by the Court of Appeals upholding his powers to impose safeguard measures under the Safeguard Measures Act (RA 8800), even if the Tariff Commission had a contrary recommendation.

In a letter to Roxas, Tañada said the provisional measure provided breathing space to the local cement industry now fighting for market share and has increased production. "The measure also provided security to cement workers who contribute more to the Philippine economy than the largest four cement importers," he said.

Gov't panel willing to start air talks with South Korea next month

By Abigail L. Ho

BOWING to pressure from Malacañang, the Philippine air panel is set to start air talks with South Korea next month instead of the initial December schedule.

A well-placed government source said the Philippine air panel would be setting a final schedule by this week or, at the latest, after the air service negotiations with the United States on July 16-18.

The schedule that the Philippine panel would come up with, however, would still be subject to the approval of the South Korean government, the source added.

Air talks with Korea were originally slated for June 18 but negotiations were pushed back to the fourth quarter because of the lingering effects of the severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) outbreak on the aviation industry.

The SARS outbreak, which peaked in April and May, affected the region so badly that Asia-Pacific airlines

were the worst performers in the global aviation industry, registering a 50-percent decline in passenger traffic for the month of May.

But tourism organizations in Cebu and Palawan questioned the move to postpone air talks with South Korea as they said additional flights between Seoul and the Philippines were badly needed now to boost the country's struggling tourism industry.

In a letter to Economic Planning Secretary Romulo Neri, Cebu Visitors and Convention Bureau chair Patrick Gregorio pointed out that the postponement of the talks for the fourth quarter of the year would be a deterrent to the growth of tourism in Cebu.

"Since the Cebu Visitors and Convention Bureau is tasked to promote Cebu as a premiere convention and events destination in the Philippines, we find this development very disturbing. This will hamper the objectives of CVCB to bring more tourists to Cebu, particularly from Asian countries," he said.

The Palawan Tourism Council aired a similar concern in a letter to

Transportation Secretary Leandro Mendoza, stating that peak months for travel in Palawan were August to December and Koreans were some of the province's top visitors.

"It was only the market from South Korea that continued to come to Palawan despite the negative image of the country abroad. Since 2001, we have seen a dramatic growth in the number of arrivals from South Korea, becoming one of our top source markets," it said.

Although arrivals from South Korea dipped slightly during the height of the SARS outbreak more than a month ago, the tourism group said this began to pick up again after the World Health Organization removed the Philippines from its list of countries to avoid due to SARS.

Neri said he had already reiterated to Mendoza and Civil Aeronautics Board executive director Tomas Mañalac that President Macapagal-Arroyo herself had given specific orders to hold air talks with South Korea at the soonest possible time.

COCKTALES



Victor C. Agustin

Bulletin on Haydee

THE GOOD news about Haydee Yorac is that she is out of the hospital.

The not-so-good news is that the chair of the Presidential Commission on Good Government still may not receive visitors, and the few that have been permitted by doctors must undergo SARS-like decontamination procedures before they are even allowed to be near her.

The PCCG chief is staying in a Makati condo that has been converted into a virtual hospital suite, with a 24-hour nurse at her side.

BMW killer

BMW recently held a driving clinic within the Subic free port, dispatching dozens of gleaming Bimmers for what should have been a weekend of camaraderie and fun.

Instead, the outing proved to be a disaster for their sleek driving machines.

In their desire to save pesos, the BMW fleet gassed up in the Subic gasoline station for the tax-free juice. Either the octane rating is not what it is touted to be or there had been contamination, for nearly all the Bimmers suffered knocks and pings shortly thereafter.

Apparently, the incident is not a one-time thing, since the BMW of a just-relocated businessman in Subic also conked out after he had filled his tank in the same station.

Erap forum

THE NOW shuttered Taza de Oro in Ermita used to be the opposition forum during the Marcos years.

This time, it is the Rotary Club of Manila that is fulfilling that role, giving a public platform to Estrada allies.

After Estrada lawyer Alan Pagua, tomorrow's Rotary speaker is none other than the Erap-era chair of Philippines Inc., lawyer-lobbyist Sergio Ortiz Luis.

Heard through the grapevine

THE FORMER president of Philam Plans, lawyer Eliseo Dizon Jr., who left after serious disagreement with his chair Jose Cuisia Jr. allegedly over the issue of compensation, has teamed up with Philam's chief competitor, Prudentiallife Plans, for a new pre-need venture.

(Cocktails may be reached by e-mail at cocktails_pdi@yahoo.com or at cocktails_pdi@hotmail.com.)

Gov't offers higher yield for \$500-M bond issue

THE PHILIPPINES plans to sell \$500 million of fresh debt this week by offering investors substantially higher yields than existing comparable sovereign dollar bonds.

Manila is tapping capital markets on behalf of state-run National Power Corp. (Napocor) after the utility company recently withdrew a \$500-million bond deal due to weak demand.

The new bond sale is seen as a litmus test of global investor appetite for the Philippines—one of the biggest issuers of sovereign bonds from Asia outside of Japan—after the recent failure of the Napocor deal.

Manila has set an indicative yield of between 8.375 and 8.5 percent for the bonds, which have a maturity of 10.5 years, market and banking sources familiar with the deal said.

Philippine sovereign dollar bonds due 2013 currently offer a yield of 7.76 percent, dealers said. They are trading at about 403 basis points above comparable US treasuries.

"The deal is likely to be priced tonight in New York. The order book is already \$400 million," a source familiar with the transaction told Reuters.

"The new bond yield looks quite attractive and is generous when com-



EDEZA

pared to the existing '13s," Ben Yuen, head of Asian fixed income at First State Investments, told Reuters.

Citigroup, Deutsche Bank Securities and JPMorgan Chase are the joint bookrunners for the transaction.

The Philippines said yesterday it had room to further lower its planned

borrowings for 2003, bolstering hopes that it would be able to meet its budget deficit target this year despite repeatedly missing forecasts in 2002.

Treasurer Sergio Edeza said the government could cancel two more regular bond auctions worth P3 billion (\$56 million) each or cut foreign borrowings by another \$100 million.

The canceled bond auctions for this month would have raised P9 billion. The Treasury said it would also reduce its treasury bills offering for this week and on July 21 to P6.5 billion from P9.5 billion. The Treasury plans to sell only P3 billion of 91-day T-bills, P2 billion of 182-day papers and P1.5 billion of 364-day bills.

Last week, the finance department announced it was reducing its planned offshore borrowings for the remainder of the year to \$400 million from \$900 million, because of the money raised from the retail bonds.

The government has so far borrowed \$1.5 billion through global bond sales this year. Reuters

Excess cash is what prompted the government to cut its remaining foreign financing requirement this year by \$500 million. A cut in borrowings should also ease pressure on local interest rates.

Stocks rise ...

From page B1

trimmed its policy rates by 25 basis points last week.

It suggests "we will be staying in a low interest rate environment in the near term" and, in the process, make the equity market a more attractive investment option, said Lawrence de Leon of Accord Capital Equities.

Westlink Global Equities chair Rommel Macapagal said the market was ripe for further gains

based on technical factors.

"The market was really targeting the 1300 level since last week, but it didn't really have enough momentum," he told Dow Jones Newswires. "There was also the addi-

tional optimism resulting from the rise in the US markets."

Improved liquidity also helped bolster the market, said Macapagal.

With treasury bill yields declining and the government cutting back on the sale

of government securities, investors are looking for other

markets to park their money, Macapagal said. AP/AF

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Visa, MasterCard must face antitrust claims

NEW YORK—A federal judge has refused to dismiss antitrust claims against MasterCard International and Visa alleging they conspired to hide fees charged to consumers who make overseas purchases.

US District Judge William Pauley, in a ruling dated last Thursday, denied motions aimed at throwing out claims that the defendants violated antitrust laws by allegedly failing to disclose the imposition of currency

exchange fees applied to overseas charges.

More than 20 class actions have been consolidated before Pauley in Manhattan federal court alleging that the two largest credit card networks and their member banks are involved in a price fixing conspiracy to set these fees and hide them from credit card holders.

Visa and MasterCard's electronic networks and settlement systems serve as clearinghouses for

general purpose card transactions in foreign countries using cards issued by their member banks. This allows cardholders from the United States to purchase goods or services in foreign countries in that country's currency.

That amount is then converted to US dollars by the respective network and billed to the US cardholder in US dollars. The prevailing conversion rate for the applicable foreign currency is applied to the cardholder's transac-

tions.

Visa and MasterCard impose a one percent surcharge on these transactions and the banks that run the networks charge another 2-percent fee.

In April, a California court ruled that MasterCard and Visa must pay millions of dollars in refunds to customers after the firms failed to properly disclose currency exchange fees.

California Superior Court Judge Ronald Sabraw said that Master-

Card and Visa, owned by banks and global financial institutions, violated California's unfair competition law by failing to disclose adequately the currency conversion fees charged to US customers using their cards abroad.

The ruling found that Visa International collected about \$817 million in foreign exchange fees from 1996 to March 30, 2000, and MasterCard \$195 million. From these figures, lawyers representing customers expect a re-

fund of more than \$800 million. The ruling calls for restitution of fees collected between Feb. 15, 1996, and the present.

MasterCard and Visa said they would appeal the California decision. Visa and MasterCard say that even after paying the one percent fees, travelers abroad get a better overall deal because the card companies offer a wholesale rate above that offered at normal tourist exchange locations. *Reuters*

Judge seeks details on \$1.4 B Wall St. deal

NEW YORK—The US judge set to approve a \$1.4-billion settlement between financial regulators and Wall Street banks accused of misleading investors has asked for more details about the landmark deal.

In an order dated July 3, New York federal judge William Pauley asked the 10 banks that agreed to the settlement in April to respond to several queries by July 18.

The move marks the second time in five weeks that Pauley has asked for more details. On June 2, Pauley quizzed the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) about issues such as how funds for investors who may have lost money due to biased stock research would be allocated.

Ten brokerages agreed on April 28 to pay a total of \$1.4 billion in fines and penalties to

end multiple investigations into whether they deliberately slanted research to attract investment banking business.

Specifically, Pauley wants each Wall Street firm to identify which stocks investors now seeking restitution actually invested in, along with the number of shares purchased and total dollar volume for the relevant time period.

The judge also wants to know whether any of the investment firms such as Citigroup Inc., Morgan Stanley and Merrill Lynch & Co. have sought federal tax deductions in connection with the fines against them.

Other questions include whether the banks have sought reimbursement from insurers and whether prohibitions on conflicts between banking and research operations apply to foreign affiliates or subsidiaries.

Leah Johnson, a spokeswoman for Citigroup, owner of brokerage Salomon Smith Barney, was not immediately available for comment. Mark Herr, a spokesman for Merrill Lynch, said that his firm had no comment about Pauley's request. Victoria Harmon, a spokeswoman for the Credit Suisse First Boston unit of Switzerland's Credit Suisse Group, declined to comment.

Citigroup, Merrill and CSFB agreed to pay the highest penalties of the entire group under the settlement with regulators, with Citigroup to pay \$400 million and Merrill and CSFB \$200 million each.

"We'll be responding to the court's questions at the appropriate time and in the appropriate manner," SEC spokesman John Heine said. *Reuters*



CITY shoppers walk past a huge smiling face in Sydney's central business district, July 8. A key National Australia Bank survey released Tuesday indicated that business confidence had surged in Australia last month, with domestic economic strength more than offsetting the weakness seen in globally exposed sectors, with retail as one area reporting strengthening conditions. *AP*

P&G gets FTC nod for Wella purchase

WASHINGTON—Procter & Gamble Co. has received antitrust clearance from the Federal Trade Commission for its acquisition of German hair-products company Wella AG.

The commission said Monday that it granted the companies early termination of the waiting period required under the Hart-Scott-Rodino Antitrust Improvements Act.

Procter & Gamble agreed to acquire 78 percent of Wella's voting shares on March 17 for about \$7 billion.

Regulatory approvals for the

takeover are also needed from other countries in which Wella operates and the European Union. The approvals are expected to take months.

Coupled with P&G's \$4.9-billion purchase of Clairol in 2001, the acquisition of Wella would extend P&G's market presence from shampoos and conditioners to hair coloring products and supplies for professional hair care salons.

P&G's products also include Folgers coffee, Crest toothpaste, Pampers diapers and Pringles snack chips. *AP*

China now has 20 million wireless phone service users

BEIJING—The number of subscribers for a cheap wireless phone service offered by China's top two fixed-line phone companies has grown by more than 50 percent since the end of last year, a senior official with a rival mobile carrier said on Monday.

The country had nearly 20 million users of the service called

"Little Smart," known locally as xiaolingtong, by the end of May, compared with 13 million at the end of last year, Wei Leping, chief engineer for the parent of Hong Kong-listed China Telecom Corp. told Reuters in a telephone interview.

Of the 20 million, the China Telecom parent accounted for about 16 million, Wei said.

Most of the remaining subscribers use a similar service offered by China Telecom's chief rival, China Network Communications Group Corp.

True mobile services pitched by China Mobile (Hong Kong) and China Unicom clocked a growth rate of just 11 percent in the same period from a much larger user base of 207 million at the end of 2002.

Little Smart, also known in

the industry as personal handset system (PHS) or personal access system (PAS), is cheaper than normal mobile services because it is built onto a city's existing fixed-line infrastructure and has limited roaming capability.

China's telecoms regulator, despite allowing the service to enter large cities such as Guangzhou and Beijing this year, has not officially thrown its weight behind the limited wireless service and does not reveal subscriber figures.

Analysts said they were surprised by the rapid growth for xiaolingtong, which has sparked a profit-denting price war among the mobile and fixed-line telephone companies.

A telecoms analyst at a European investment bank in Hong Kong said he revised his end-2003 forecast for the service to 34 million users from 24 million in the news.

He said he expected the Hong Kong-listed China Telecom Corp. Ltd. to have 7.6 million users by the year-end, up from three million from the end of 2002. *Reuters*



TRADERS laugh on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange as they watch stock prices at the NYSE. Technology stocks shot up in early trading sending the Nasdaq over 1,700 for the first time since May 2002. *AP*

Levi Strauss & Co. sues Esprit Holdings of HK

SAN FRANCISCO—Jeans maker Levi Strauss & Co. has sued Esprit Holdings Ltd., alleging the Hong Kong-based fashion retailer illegally used its trademarked tab on the back pockets of jeans, a Levi Strauss spokeswoman said on Monday.

The lawsuit is one of 300 trademark cases filed by Levi Strauss currently pending in the United States and underscores how the privately owned San Francisco-based company protects the distinctive symbols

stitched onto its clothing, said company spokeswoman Linda Butler.

"This isn't that unusual," Butler said. "Most cases settle before trial." Esprit Holdings could not be immediately reached for com-

ment on the lawsuit filed last week in a US District Court in San Francisco.

In the lawsuit, Levi Strauss seek to stop Esprit from using the tabs on its jeans and asks for damages. *Reuters*

Atlantic City opens first casino in 13 years

LOS ANGELES—Atlantic City's first casino in 13 years opened without major hitches over the July 4 holiday weekend, the chief executive of operator Boyd Gaming Corp. said on Monday, predicting a marketing battle with rivals for high rollers.

The 43-story, \$1-billion Borgata casino let the first visitors into its marble and wood-clad halls on July 3, offering a touch of Las Vegas-style flash to the seaside town where rival operators are also sprucing up and building additions.

Bill Boyd, chair and chief executive of Boyd, said that a rivalry for the best customers in Atlantic City was in the cards, but he stopped short of predicting a promotional war.

"If I were a competitor in that market and Borgata opened, I would know that many of my customers are going to go and experience Borgata and they are going to do that whether I would like it or not. I would want them to come back," Boyd said in a telephone interview.

"I certainly think they are going to be making very, very concerted efforts to keep those customers in the fold." The Borgata is a joint venture between Las Vegas-based MGM Mirage, owner of the Bellagio and other megaresorts on the Strip, and its cross-town rival Boyd, which owns the venerable Stardust and is running the Borgata. Caesars Palace owner Park Place Entertain-

ment Corp., Taj Mahal owner Trump Hotels and Casino Resorts Inc., Harrah's Entertainment Inc. and Tropicana-owner Azar Corp. are the main incumbents in Atlantic City.

Major casinos have had major problems opening in the past, but accounts from Atlantic City were generally positive.

Boyd shrugged off reports of minor glitches such as elevators not making it to the top floor of the Borgata as inconsequential, saying he was "very, very pleased" with the start.

Competition between Atlantic City casinos is rising as operators add luxury hotel rooms, shops, and more of the alternatives to gambling that Atlantic City has lacked.

Boyd said that he expected to make a profit in the hotel business, despite the widespread availability of free rooms to gamblers, a practice that accounts for more than half the occupancy at major casinos, analysts say.

"We think we will be profitable," on the hotel side, he said, although he declined to forecast how many rooms would be given away to customers.

Building up a base of high rollers is crucial for the success of the venture. Some 30 million people live within driving distance of Atlantic City, but the Borgata is still aimed at the regional market rather than an international crowd, he said. *Reuters*

Court says J & J unit infringed on Israeli's patent

NEW YORK—Medical device maker Medinol said Monday that a Dutch court issued a preliminary judgment against Johnson & Johnson's Cordis unit for infringing on its patents.

Israel-based Medinol said the injunction will temporarily prevent Cordis from selling its stents in Europe. Stents are metal scaffolds used to keep arteries open.

However, Cordis said the judgment will only prevent it from selling and manufacturing the stents in the Netherlands or distributing them from there.

Cordis spokesman Marty Schildhouse said the Netherlands is Europe's primary distribution center for stents, but that the company "will have operations in place to allow us to operate outside the Netherlands." He wouldn't be more specific and added that the company's stent sales in the Netherlands are minor.

The court said Cordis will have to pay Medinol \$45,900 per breach of the order or \$4,600 for every infringing stent. It was not immediately clear what the total would be.

Both sides said the decision by the Court of Appeals in The Hague was only temporary until the case went to trial. Neither knew when the trial would begin.

Johnson & Johnson shares fell 1 cent to close at \$52.98 a share on the New York Stock Exchange. *AP*

People, Events & Products

Jolly Kiddie Meal: Pinoy 'pasalubong' kids love

GIFTS and pasalubongs are our Pinoy way to let our loved ones know that they are cared for and thought of amidst distance and time. And for children, it is a silent, and usually effective, message that they are important to their parents. Your pasalubong



need not be grand; it is the thought that counts, we customarily say.

There are so many ways to show you care to your kids. Giving them the pasalubong they best appreciate and love is one way to melt their hearts. That is why only Jollibee's Kiddie Meals fits into the picture as they make your children's day complete. Trust Jollibee to bring you pasalubongs that would give your kids the feeling they are the best and number one in your lives.

"Mahal na mahal ako ni Mama kasi binibigyan niya ako ng paborito ko. Alam niya gustung-gusto ko ang Jollibee kaya binilhan niya ako ng Jolly Kiddie Meal. Siyempre, kiniss ko si Mama kasi love ko rin siya, eh," 3-year-old Ivy shyly shared.

That brings you to think of what is in the Jolly Kiddie Meal toy that make it the Pinoy pasalubong kids love.

• Exciting designs and themes-the colorful and appealing toys can spark

your child's imagination and creativity.

• Cool functions-some of the toys have their uses like the stationery set and bathroom accessories, to name a few.

• Safe and high quality-no need to worry for health hazards because these imported toys follow international safety standards.

"Ang mga anak ko, kapag umaalis kami ng Papa nila, Jolly Kiddie Meal agad ang pinapabili. Gusto nila ang Chickenjoy at ang mga toys. Ako naman, Spaghetti Special ang lagi kong ino-order doon. Maka-Jollibee talaga ako kasi malapit ito sa pusong Pinoy. Kaya ang saya-saya ko naman kapag nakikita kong tuwang-tuwa sila sa pasalubong na dinadala namin sa kanila. Nakakataba ng puso," Julie Amellos, mother of two, revealed.

On your way home, be sure to stop by a Jollibee store and bring your kids their favorite Jolly Kiddie Meal toys, the Pinoy pasalubong they love.



MAÑOSA RECEIVES LIKHA GOLD MEDAL AWARD

The United Architects of the Philippines (UAP) recently presented the Likha Gold Award to architect Francisco T. Mañosa (2nd from left) for attaining the highest standard of ethical conduct and excellence in the practice of the architectural profession. This award is the highest distinction bestowed by UAP to a fellow who has impeccable moral character, and

has contributed positively to society. Also shown are (from left) UAP College of Fellow chancellor architect Yolanda Reyes, UAP president architect Robert Sac and committee on awards chair architect Celia Dizon. Mañosa will share his ingenuity in contemporary Filipino architecture through his book 'Designing Filipino' to be launched on July 23.

Outback Restaurant's attractive party packages

WANT an Auss'm party? Outback Restaurant offers "no worries" set meal and party packages to make your celebration a bonzer one.

The set meal package is available for a minimum order of 10 and includes complete meals from entrees, side dishes, desserts and beverages. If you want a grand celebration or a simple one, Outback will fit in your budget and serve the dishes buffet style.

Outback's party package includes an exclusive party area (unlimited time use), free two kegs of beer for a minimum of 100 guests, free use of 2 billiard tables for a minimum of 150 guests (for Outback Libis only), and free corkage on all hard liquor.

Make it Outback Restaurant for any occasion. Visit its branches at Glorietta IV (729-8458), Libis (634-3801) and Alabang Town Center (772-1845) for inquiries.

Forum on selecting IT offices set

WHAT qualities of building and office sites are perfect for telemarketing, call centers, telecoms and information technology-related businesses, including call centers?

This will be the focus of a forum on "Maximizing Media and IT Businesses Through High-Tech Offices" organized by RubyComm on July 11 at The Espana Tower Conference Room, 8th floor starting 3 p.m.

Forum speakers are Antonio Lopez, president and chief executive officer of Data Stream Inc., Rodolfo Santos, telecoms installations consultant with long years of experience with

the NEC, and Lynn Maceda, executive vice president and chief operating officer of FF Land Corp., the property arm of an internationally noted construction company.

Lopez presents his insights on "Projecting IT Businesses for the Long-Term" while Santos tackles "Emerging Telecoms Technologies and Their Impact on Choosing and Maximizing Office Locations."

Maceda, for her part, deals with the criteria of property developments targeting telecoms and IT-related businesses, including call centers and telemarketing. Maceda brings in her

talk The Espana Tower experience in attracting telecoms and IT companies as office locators. The 32-story tower currently houses the Eastern Telecoms and Nextel offices.

FF Land, the marketing managers of The Espana Tower, recently offered attractive summer months promo for buyers of commercial units, which are now available to the public with parking slot packages.

Interested forum participants can register by accessing www.rubycomm.com/infotechoffices or by calling 453-4553, 456-0882, 456-0932, 0917-5331936, or 0918-9422546.

Drinking green tea follows ancient traditions, leads to well-being

TEA DRINKING is an age-old Chinese custom with origins that date back to 2737 BC. A popular legend has it that Emperor Shen Nung, known as the great "divine healer," discovered tea when a gust of wind carried a few stray leaves of the Camellia sinensis plant into a pot of water he was boiling to drink later on.

More than 4,000 years and 3,000 varieties of the drink thereafter, health enthusiasts consume as much as five cups of tea a day, especially after researchers found out about the benefits tea offered. Gone are the days when it was drunk merely to keep warm on a chilly night or to socialize at gatherings. Today, many people sip steaming cups of tea to

help protect them from diseases. In the Philippines, survey shows that around 80 percent believe green tea lowers cholesterol, is good for the skin, and enhances fat burning.

Tea, specifically green tea, is slowly gaining popularity for its positive effects on health. Much credit goes to the healing power of polyphenols found in the leaves of the Camellia sinensis plant.

Polyphenols work as powerful antioxidants. One called epigallocatechin gallate (EGCG) has been discovered to be five times stronger than vitamin E in protecting body cells to damage caused by oxidation. As an antioxidant, EGCG aids in the deactivation of free radicals, which are

known to damage cells causing diseases such as cancer and heart disease.

Drinking green tea is a daily habit that will certainly prove to be advantageous to drinkers given the benefits brought by the epigallocatechin gallate. Studies in Japan have shown that green tea intake is correlated with a lower risk of stroke and heart disease. Other studies also show that people taking moderate amounts of green tea burn fat faster than normal.

It has been an ancient tradition to drink green tea regularly and it soon should be a custom among many people these days, given the health benefits it provides.



WELCOME HOME PARTY FOR SINGER

A 'bienvenida' party for coloratura soprano Rogie R. Cabreza (seated) was recently hosted by lawyers Crisanto and Mirna Saruca (2nd and 3rd from left) at their Pasig residence. Also shown are some of the guests who attended the party.

They are, from left, Ester A. Locson, Jude Areopagita, Noemi L. Cuenca, Nene Cristobal, Rudy Farol, and Narding Torres. Rogie came home fresh from several singing engagements in Guam.



PURINA MOST OUTSTANDING FEED PRODUCT

Purina Chows was awarded as the most outstanding feed product of the year at the 2003 Parangal sa Pamilyang Pilipino and National Products and Services Excellence Awards. The awards night was held at the Irwin Theater of the Ateneo de Manila May 24. Purina was the only agricultural sector

awarded by the Organization for Peace and Progressive Oriented Group Inc. Shown, from left, are Teresita Vinluan, Secretary Mike Defensor, Myra Balde, and Dr. Jayvee Ovejera of Purina Feeds, Secretary Angelo T. Reyes, City Councilor Dante M. de Guzman and professor Lourdes Lero.

ProductFiles

Add a little magic to your child's bedtime

CREATE the happiest rooms on earth with various designs of coordinated Disney Home Bedding Character and Solid Color Collection.

The Disney Mickey collection by Canadian offers coordinated bed sheets, reversible comforters, panel pillowcases and huggable bolster cases that will surely make every child's room comfy, bright and fun. With Mickey and his friends around, kids will find every excuse to stay in their rooms.

Kids can lull and roll with the Mickey Dots design or frolic and play with their favorite Garden Pals. There are other fun designs to choose from: Mickey Stripes, Mickey Basics, and Mickey Blue Sky.

Disney Home and Canadian also offers the Solid Color Collection where one can mix and match their beddings for a perfectly coordinated look. Mommies and daddies will surely like the sophistication of this collection available in a variety of colors.

Moreover, Canadian values its customers and makes sure that their products go through consistent testing on quality standards, color fastness and peeling grade, so customers can enjoy these products for years.

Disney Home Beddings by Canadian are available at SM Department Stores, Super SM, Robinsons Galleria, Landmark, Shopwise Alabang and Our Home, Megamall.



BPI AMONG FINANCE ASIA'S BEST

The Bank of the Philippine Islands was the only bank that made it to the five categories of Finance Asia Magazine's list of best companies in the Philippines for 2003. BPI consistently figured as one of the top 10 companies in the Philippines using the categories: best managed company (ranked 6th), best corporate governance (3rd), best financial management (7th), best in investor relations (5th) and most committed to shareholder value (4th), as criteria. The

annual recognition of Asia's best companies is based on a survey given to almost 300 fund managers and equity analysts by the monthly Hong Kong-based financial magazine. The results of the survey were published in the April 2003 issue of Finance Asia. Shown is BPI senior EVP Aurelio R. Montinola III (center) and BPI SVP Ma. Ysabel Syllanteng accepting the award from Finance Asia associate publisher and managing director Jonathan Hirst.

HLURB updates lecture

THE URBAN Institute of Real Estate conducts a lecture on Housing and Land Use Regulatory Board updated rules and regulations and Property Development at Max's Restaurant, Glorietta 2, Park Square Drive corner Theater Drive, Ayala Center, Makati on July 8, 1:30 to 6 p.m. Lena Vergara, deputy head of technical services, HLURB-NCR and engineer Enrico S. Cruz, licensed real estate consultant, will be the resource speakers. Vergara talks on the new guidelines on subdivision planning and development, which covers the latest updates, revisions and amendments on the HLURB rules and procedures and related issues on subdivision and condominium development in the light of the current economic situation. For particulars, interested parties can call Urban Institute of Real Estate at 681-0928.

Café Nescafé opens in Robinsons Galleria

COFFEE shop lovers who frequent Robinsons Galleria at the Ortigas Center are invited to visit the newly opened Café Nescafé located at the 3rd level of the mall and savor its delightful food and beverage selections.



Choose from the unique Café Nescafé lineup called Coffees of the World. There are 13 delicious concoctions to choose from: After Eight Coffee of the United Kingdom, Coffee Amaretto of Italy, Café Viennese of Austria, Belgian Orange Coffee of Belgium, Kahlua Coffee of Mexico, Hazelnut Truffle Latte of Switzerland, Black Forest Mocha of Germany, Dutch Coffee Special of Holland, Café Brazilia of Brazil, Raspberry Truffle Latte of the United States, Jamocha of Jamaica, Canadian Vanilla Swirl of Canada, and the Philippines' own Coffee Manila.

Other Café Nescafé branches are located at the Powerplant Mall in Rockwell Center, Makati, Robinsons Place Manila, Glorietta 3 at Ayala Center, Alabang Town Center, Naia Terminal 2, and the City Lifestyle Building along Timog Avenue in Quezon City.

Café Nescafé is operated by La Barista Inc., a professional food and beverage company. For comments and inquiries, visit www.nescafe.com.ph, or e-mail cafe.nescafe@ph.nestle.com.

Special meals at Circle Garden Grill

THE BEST in grilled Filipino foods can now be savored in Mandaluyong City's newest dining destination, Circle Garden Grill restaurant. As a special treat for all dine-in customers on its grand opening day, Circle Garden Grill will be dishing out selected house menus at affordable prices. Starting off with P8 pork barbecue, Batangas bulalo soup, grilled oyster, sizzling bangus, inihaw na panga from Gen. Santos City, and inihaw na bangus from Dagupan. This offer is good from July 9 to 11 only. Enjoy its value meals at P29 with 2 pork barbeques with java rice, pork chop with rice at P39, barbecue chicken wings plus pork barbecue with plain rice at P49, and deep-fried boneless bangus with rice at P59. Every meal comes with a free Coke. Visit Circle Garden Grill along Maysilo Street, Mandaluyong City.





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 P3.295M 8903461 loc 34

nr UST, Espana Tower
 6873372-0917-8102903

Taft Ave. Acrs La Salle, 1BR
 33Sqm 1.6M RFO By Dec '03
 Bernie (0918) 9282591/5517649

1-2-3BR nr La Salle TAFT
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 18% DP P9T/mo or 2Yrs No Int.
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 ACROSS SM SUCAT 0917-5313225

PASIG

Alexandra
 182m² & 216m² P9 SM Neg. 0917-4128709

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2BR CUBAO 1.2M 9120679

Cubao P1.4m 10%DP 9132224

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CONDO/TOWNHOUSE

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 12T/mo. or .3Yrs No Int. or
 10% D.P. LIPAT AGAD 3-5BR
 15min Fr Mktl 0917-8196949

MANILA

Nr LA SALLE TAFT
 Bnew/Townhse/3stry/3br/3tb/grge
 P3.295M 8903461 loc 34

nr UST, Espana Tower
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Taft Ave. Acrs La Salle, 1BR
 33Sqm 1.6M RFO By Dec '03
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PARANAQUE

900T Condo Nr Airport
 18% DP P9T/mo or 2Yrs No Int.
 AYALA PROJECT STUDIO-3BR
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PASIG

Alexandra
 182m² & 216m² P9 SM Neg. 0917-4128709

LA-64 FA-120 3BR 2TB
 W/MAIDS RM 1CAR 634-9500

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QUEZON CITY

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Cubao P1.4m 10%DP 9132224

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Republic of the Philippines
Office of the President**BCDA**

Bases Conversion Development Authority

**INVITATION FOR PREQUALIFICATION
UNDER SUBIC-CLARK-TARLAC EXPRESSWAY PROJECT (SCTEP)**

1. The Government of the Republic of the Philippines, through the Bases Conversion Development Authority (BCDA), invites interested Japanese Contractors to apply for prequalification to bid for the following Contract Packages:

- A. Name of Project : SCTEP Contract Package 1, Subic-Clark Section
Length : 50.4 Kms.
Location : Batangas and Pampanga Provinces, Region III
Construction Period : 31 months
Source of Funding : JBIC Loan No. PH-P226 & GOP

SCOPE OF WORK

- (1) Construction of new 4-lane ACP divided highway (50.4 km length) along mountainous terrain and on embankment
- (2) Construction of five (5) interchanges, twenty nine (29) bridges, two (2) overpasses and fifteen (15) underpasses
- (3) Lahar treated with cement based solidifying material is to be used in the construction of base course, sub-base course and embankment
- (4) Construction of toll plazas
- (5) Construction of modern toll collection system, toll collection facilities and traffic control facilities

- B. Name of Project : SCTEP Contract Package 2, Clark - Tarlac Section
Length : 44.0 Kms.
Location : Pampanga and Tarlac Provinces, Region III
Construction Period : 28 months
Source of Funding : JBIC Loan No. PH - P226 & GOP

SCOPE OF WORK

- (1) Construction of new 4-lane ACP divided highway (44.0 km length) on embankment
 - (2) Construction of nine (9) interchanges, seven (7) bridges, four (4) overpasses and sixteen (16) underpasses.
 - (3) Lahar treated with cement based solidifying material is to be used in the construction of the base course and sub-base course and embankment
 - (4) Construction of toll plazas
 - (5) Construction of toll operation center building and other facilities
 - (6) Procurement of toll road maintenance equipment
2. The project is financially assisted by the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC). The application is open to bonafide qualified contractors from Japan experienced in civil works. Japanese contractors should be licensed in Japan and certified with current accreditation under ISO 9001 or 9002 or other internationally accepted quality assurance standards. In case of Joint Venture, each member must satisfy the requirements in order to be jointly and severally liable for any and all obligations which the Joint Venture may incur.

3. Prequalification Documents will be available for issuance to interested applicants from July 2, 2003 at the Office of the Chairman, Special Bids and Awards Committee (SBAC), Bases Conversion Development Authority, BCDA Corporate Center, Gozar corner Lucas Streets Villamor Air Base, Pasay City, Philippines, Telephone No. (632) 510 0409, Facsimile No. (632) 551 1817. The Documents for each package will be issued upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Ten Thousand Philippine Pesos (Php 10,000.00) or Two Hundred US Dollars (US\$200.00).

4. Fully accomplished Prequalification Documents for the subject contracts shall be submitted by applicants to the SBAC not later than 10:00 AM on August 16, 2003.

5. All particulars relative to prequalification, bid evaluation and award of contract shall be governed by the provisions of the Loan Agreement, the Guidelines for Procurement under JBIC ODA Loans and other applicable rules and regulations.

6. BCDA reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any defects contained therein, and accept the offer most advantageous to the government, subject to the concurrence of JBIC.

(Sgd.) ISAAC S. PUNO, III
Chairman, Special Bids and Awards Committee (SBAC)

(PDI-July 9, 2003)

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Science and Technology
PHILIPPINE SCIENCE HIGH SCHOOL-BICOL REGION CAMPUS
Tagonglong, Goa, Camarines Sur**INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID**

The Philippine Science High School-Bicol Region Campus, Tagonglong, Goa, Camarines Sur, invites interested licensed Consulting Firms with specialty in the design of school building to participate in the bidding for the design of Academic building at PSHS-BICOL REGION CAMPUS located at Tagonglong, Goa, Camarines Sur. The approved budget for the Architectural and Engineering Services to be bid is P 650,000.00 and appropriated in the FY General appropriation Act (GAA).

Eligibility Forms shall be available for issuance on June 30 up to July 10, 2003 at the Office of the Director, PSHS-BRC at Tagonglong, Goa, Camarines Sur upon presentation of this advertisement and payment of a non-refundable fee of P300.00. All accomplished Eligibility Forms should be supported by original documents which should be submitted to the above Office on or before 2:00 p.m. of July 18, 2003.

All eligible consulting firms shall be invited to submit their technical and financial proposals. The date of the pre-bidding conference shall be on July 29, 2003 at 10:00 a.m., Office of the Director, PSHS-BRC, Tagonglong, Goa, Camarines Sur. The date of submission, receipts of sealed bids and opening of bids shall be on August 12, 2003, 10:00 a.m. at the same venue.

The PSHS-BRC reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any defects thereto, accept bids as may be deemed advantageous thereto or postpone the bidding for whatever cause it may deem proper.

(Sgd.) ARNEL P. BERMEJO
BAC Chairman

(PDI-July 2 & 9, 2003)

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Republic of the Philippines
Province of Batangas
Municipality of Talisay**PREQUALIFICATION, BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE****INVITATION TO APPLY
FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID**

The Municipality of Talisay, through its PREQUALIFICATION, BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE (PBAC), invites Contractor registered with and classified by the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) to apply for eligibility and if found eligible, to bid for the CONSTRUCTION OF MUNICIPAL BUILDING OF the Municipality of Talisay, Province of Batangas. The eligibility screening is scheduled on July 18, 2003 (Friday) at 9:00 in the morning at the Office of the Municipal Mayor. The opening of BIDS is on July 31, 2003 at 10:00 AM at said office.

The PBAC reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive minor defect and accept the offer most advantageous to the government.

The PBAC assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the bid.

PBAC SECRETARIAT

(PDI-July 9 & 10, 2003)

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TransCo

National Transmission Corporation

Date : June 30, 2003

Reference No. : —

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

1. Contract Code : Sp98.KBSS.VI.0233
Title : Construction, Erection and Installation of 138 & 69KV Substation Equipment under the Negros III - Panay III Substation Projects, Schedule II - Bacolod Substation
Location : Brgy. Mansilingan, Bacolod City

2. The works to be completed by the successful bidder shall consist of furnishing all superintendence, labor, materials, supplies, tools and equipment (except materials and equipment specified to be furnished by TRANSCO), and constructing complete the substation and installing all substation equipment to complete the Construction, Erection and Installation of 138 & 69KV Substation Equipment for Schedule II - Bacolod Substation in accordance with the Plans and Specifications. The work also includes construction of new control house, open-sided warehouse, pump house, oil water separator and water tank and water tank foundation.

3. The Approved Budget for the Contract to be Bid is FORTY THREE MILLION FIVE HUNDRED TEN THOUSAND THREE HUNDRED NINETY SIX (PHP 43,510,396.00) from the Internal Cash Generation (ICG) of National Transmission Corporation.

4. Application for Eligibility is open to Filipino contractors who have the legal, technical and financial requisites of the contract to be bid/project with the following License and Registration Particulars:

License : at least "Category AA - Specialty: Electrical Works"
Registration : at least "Large A - Specialty: Electrical Works"

5. Application for Eligibility shall be evaluated using "PASS/FAIL" criteria and only Eligible Bidders shall be invited by Transco in the bidding. All bids equal to or lower than the Approved Budget for the Contract to be Bid shall be evaluated based on the responsiveness of the contractor's offer to the contract under bidding subject to Postqualification before an award is made. Bid Prices submitted higher than the Approved Budget for the Contract to be Bid shall be rejected and returned outright.

6. Eligibility Documents and Forms will be available for issuance on July 01, 2003 at the Bids and Contracts Management Department, Second Floor, Building No. 2, NPC-OB, National Transmission Corporation, Agham Road corner Quezon Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City 1104, Telefax No.: 921-2308 upon presentation of Letter of Intent, Contractor's License and a payment of non-refundable fee of One Thousand Pesos (P1,000.00) per copy.

7. Deadline for submission of duly accomplished Application for Eligibility, Forms, documents and statements shall be on or before 5:00 p.m. of August 01, 2003 and shall be submitted at the registration office and address mentioned above. If the date is a non-working day or declared non-working day, the deadline for submission shall be moved to the next working day immediately following said date. Late submission and/or incomplete application shall not be accepted.

8. Contractor, not yet included in the Transco's List of Registered Contractors, who wishes to participate in the public bidding, in order to facilitate eligibility check/screening, are requested to register with the registration office mentioned above by submitting the following basic requirements which should be maintained current and updated at least once a year. A Certificate of Registration will be issued to contractors upon approval.

Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) business name registration or Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) registration certificate, as appropriate;

Mayor's permit and/or municipal license for the current year;

Taxpayer's Identification Number;

Notarized statement of the prospective bidder that it is not "blacklisted" or barred from bidding by any government agency, office or corporation, including, in the case of procurement of civil works, non-inclusion in the "blacklist" of contractors issued by the CIAP;

Audited financial statements, stamped "received" by the BIR or its duly accredited and authorized institutions, for the immediately preceding calendar year, showing, among others, the prospective bidder's total and current assets and liabilities inclusive of Income Tax Return and Receipt;

Contractor's License

9. TransCo reserves the right to reject any Application for Eligibility or all Bids or request for registration without offering any reasons, waive any required formality therein, and to make an award to the bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the government.

10. Additional Information shall be furnished upon request. All communications should be addressed to the undersigned at the aforementioned address.

(Sgd.) WINIFREDO SM. PANGILINAN
Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI - July 4, 9 & 15, 2003)

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Health**DR. JOSE FABELLA MEMORIAL HOSPITAL**
Manila**INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID**

The Dr. Jose Fabella Hospital invites interested accredited bidders/suppliers to apply for eligibility and to bid for the following:

- Supply and delivery of:
 - a. Medical Liquid Oxygen including Vacuum Insulated Evaporator
- Equipment Rentals
 - a. ABG Machine
 - b. Elisa Machine
 - c. Ventilator

The approved agency budget is P4.5 M for Liquid Oxygen and P6.1M. For Rentals (ABG Machine, Elisa Machine, and Ventilator).

Bid documents and eligibility requirements may be secured from the BAC Secretariat, Administrative Office, starting July 2, 2003 upon payment of non-refundable fee of P500.00

All particulars relative to eligibility, bid bond, performance bond, pre-bid conference, bid evaluation, postqualification and award of contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of E.O. 40 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations.

Pre-bidding Conference will be on July 14, 2003 at the DJFMH Reception Hall. Submission and opening of bids together with the eligibility envelopes will be on July 28, 2003. For further details, please contact the BAC Secretariat at telephone nos. 735-71-44, 734-55-61 to 65 loc. 109.

The DJFMH reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, waive any required formality and award the contract to any bidder whose proposal is evaluated as the lowest calculated and most responsive bid advantageous to the government.

(Sgd.) MRS. MARIE THERESE A. PACABIS
Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI - July 2 & 9, 2003)

OBITUARIES**DEATH NOTICES****FELISA G. SISON**

Body lies in state at Funeraria Paz, Sucat. Interment today, July 9, 2003 at 9:00 a.m. at Manila Memorial Park.

REV. MSGR. JOSE C. ABRIO

Who died on July 6, 2003 at the age of 85. Interment will be on Thursday, July 10, 2003 at 9:00 a.m. at the Manila Cathedral.

**MABEL FLORENCE LINCALLO
HODREAL**

Passed away on July 7, 2003 at the age of 41. Interment will be on Friday, July 11, 2003 after the 10:00 a.m. Mass at La Funeraria Paz-Sucat.

PACIFICO M. VILLANUEVA

Passed away on July 6, 2003 Interment will be on Thursday, July 10, 2003 after the 8:00 a.m. Mass at Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina.

Xofrando "Roy" Domingo

of Quezon City & Liliw, Laguna

Peacefully joined our Lord
and Savior on the

7th day of July 2003, at the age of 74.

He is survived by his wife Sally; children Raymond and Ginia, Rowena & Dennis (†), Rose-Ann & Jerome, Jessica & Eugene; grandchildren Manuel, Francis, Phoebe, Isaac, Nathan, Ariel & Jared; brothers, sisters, relatives and friends.

His body lies in state at Chapel 12A (South Wing) La Funeraria Paz, 143 G. Araneta Ave., Quezon City.

Cremation will be on Friday, July 11, 2003 at the Funeraria Paz Crematorium after the 9:00 a.m. service.

"I am the resurrection and life. He who believes in Me will live, even though he dies; and whoever believes in Me will never die."

John 11:25-26

REMEDIOS LEBRON JOTA LARA

Peacefully joined our Lord
on July 8, 2003 at the age of 76.

Her loving husband FRANCISCO C. LARA; children and children-in-law Tommy and Epay, Pancho and Cynthia, Bobby and Irma, Jaime and Marissa, Rolando and Rachel, Benjie and Melanie; grandchildren Angelo, Francis, Monica, Rebecca, Christina, Rosabelle, Alexandra, Louise, Maxine, Franz, Samantha, Elijah, Sarah and Raiza; brothers and sisters, in-laws, nephews and nieces, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her body lies in state at Mt. Carmel Church, Doña J. Rodriguez Ave., Q.C.

Interment will be on July 12, 2003 at La Loma Cemetery, Kalookan City after the 1:00 p.m. Mass.



An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.

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OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS: ① Copy of Death Certificate ② Any identification document (I.D.)

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INTERMENT NOTICE**

Name	Date of Interment	Time	Place of Interment	Place of Wake
GERONIMO M. AQUINO Sr.	JULY 10	1:00 PM	Holy Gardens Memorial Park, Taytay, Rizal	12 A Avocado St., Taytay, Rizal
JIM YECINO MACALIPAY	JULY 9	2:00 P.M.	Holy Gardens Greenhills, Mem. Park, Calamba City	Rizal Memorial Chapel, Calamba City

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The Management and Staff of

Computer Network Systems Corp.

and

Mosaic Communications, Inc.

Commemorate the Second Death Anniversary of their beloved Founder

Dr. WILLY N. GAN

Former President, **Computer Network Systems Corp.**
 Former Chairman & CEO, **Mosaic Communications, Inc.**

who passed away peacefully on
 July 9, 2001 (US Pacific Time)
 July 10, 2001 (Manila Time)

Holy Masses will be offered on July 9, 2003 at the following churches:

Shrine of Mary (Our Lady of EDSA), Ortigas, Pasig.....	12:15NN & 5:30PM
Sto. Niño de Paz, Greenbelt Chapel, Makati.....	5:45PM
Our Lady of Atonement (Baguio Cathedral), Baguio City	7:00AM & 5:15PM
Redemptorist Church, Davao City	5:30PM
Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Church, Cebu City	12:15NN

Our many thanks to all who keep him in their memory.

In Loving Memory

WILLY N. GAN

February 13, 1946 – July 10, 2001

His loving wife, **Beta Balagot-Gan** and children, **Isabelle** and **Richard** request relatives and friends to join them in their prayers.

Holy Masses will be offered on July 9, 2003 at the following churches:

Shrine of Mary (Our Lady of EDSA).....	12:15 NN & 5:30 PM
Ortigas, Pasig	
Sto. Niño de Paz	5:45 PM
Greenbelt Chapel, Makati	
Our Lady of Atonement	7:00 AM & 5:15 PM
(Baguio Cathedral), Baguio City	
Redemptorist Church	5:30 PM
Davao City	
Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Church	12:15NN
Cebu City	

"Our bonds live on, though you are now on the other side ..."

"...Absent with the body to be present with the Lord."

BIENVENIDO MIRANO ARO

Peacefully joined his Creator on July 7, 2003
 at the age of 73.

In loving memories of his wife **NILDA**; children **WILLY** & **SALLY**, **NOEL SR.** & **LYN**, **MALOU** & **VON**, **SHONEE** & **NILO**, **NELBI** and grandchildren, **NICO**, **HAZEL** & **ALFRED**, **GLADYS** & **RODEL**, **NOEL JR.** & **NADJA**, **XENIA** & **JIGS**, **AVIE**, **MARK**, **LIEZL** & **BOYET**, **ALLAN** & **MABEL**, **AB** & **RUEL**, **YCKA**, **JM** and **KEN** and great grandchildren, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His body lies in state at Arlington Memorial Chapels, Inc.
 12 G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Sunday, July 13, 2003, 9:00 a.m. at
 Manila Memorial Park, Dasmariñas Cavite.

Our Beloved Mother

MAXIMINA TAN ERPELO

(Widow of Manuel Erpelo Sr.)

Died peacefully in the Grace of our Lord
 on July 7, 2003 at the age of 88.

Her bereaved family

Children **MONA LISA** & **GIL BORLAZA**
MANUEL JR. & **FRATERNIDAD ERPELO**
MINERVA & **RAMON SANTOS**
MARILYN ERPELO
MELISSA & **WILLIAM HIGELMIRE**
MANUEL III & **LUCENA ERPELO**

grandchildren and other relatives request your prayers for the eternal
 repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at 479 A. Mabini St., Caloocan City.
 Holy Mass will be celebrated on Friday, July 11, 2003, 1:00 p.m. at
 the San Roque Parish Church, A. Mabini St., Caloocan City after which
 interment will be at the Holy Cross Memorial Park in Novaliches,
 Quezon City.

What is the key to an effective business presentation?

DEAR WW: My boss wants me to fill in for him and give a presentation to a big conference. I'm nervous and don't even know where to begin.

I Can Walk My Walk, But Can I Talk My Talk?

Before I give you my speech on public speaking, let me tell you about the time G.M. came up with a presentation that just didn't translate into sales.

It took place in the 70's when Chevrolet decided to export a popular U.S. model to Mexico. Expectations were high because the Nova was reasonably priced, it was a hot seller, and Chevrolet was going to put its marketing muscle behind the car. There was only one small problem: in Spanish Nova means "no go."

Chevrolet learned the hard way the importance of speaking the same language as your audience. (The Mexican sales of the Nova stalled, just like its south of the border translation.) It's no

different when giving a presentation. The following questions should help you connect with your audience. I've adapted them from "Loud and Clear: How to prepare and deliver effective business and technical presentations" (by Morrissey, Sechrest & Warman, Addison Wesley, 1997). Unlike most books on giving presentations, this is specifically targeted for the workplace. It covers everything from how to handle a heckler to how to set up a room for maximum impact.

What is your objective? Unless you're at a psychic's convention, chances are the audience will not be able to read your mind to get your message. So you've got to be clear in communicating it. Before you start writing your speech, write down your main point in a single sentence. Then make sure your speech gets that point across.

What do you know about the audience? Do some digging to find out who will be there and

WORKING WOUNDED

Bob Rosner



what their hot buttons are, then tailor your speech to them. To keep my focus as I write a speech, I keep my objective and a description of a typical audience member and his chief concerns on a post-it note stuck to my computer.

What emotional impact do you hope to have on the audience? Most people giving presentations adopt the attitude of Dragnet's Sgt. Friday, "Just the facts, ma'am." They forget that what people take away from a presentation is how the speaker made them feel. So remember that even though most business people don't wear them on their sleeves, they DO have hearts: play to them.

What will the audience take away? They're giving you their most valuable possession-time. Give them something in return. I try to give a blend of solid advice plus humor (or as I like to say, "ha-ha plus ahah"). You can develop your own formula. But before you speak ask yourself: "is this worth giving up half an hour for?"

If you use this advice, it should help you connect with your audience. Then, hopefully, your presentation won't be a Nova.

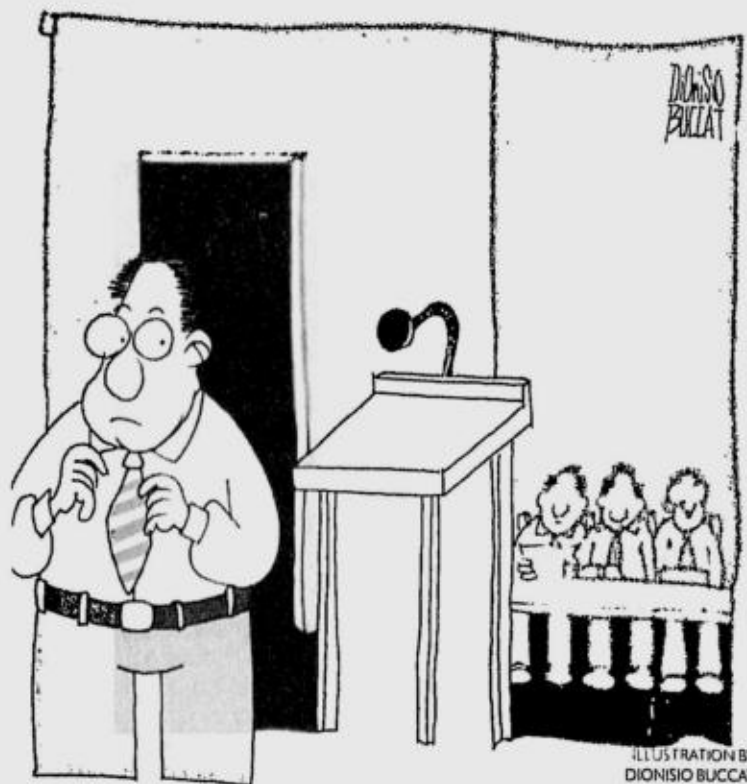
Here are the results of the recent workingwounded.com poll: What is the worst sin that you can make while giving a speech? (Total number of votes, 327)

-Say nothing new, 14 percent

-Never end, 30.2 percent

-Ramble, 55.6 percent

Our winning public speaking strategy comes from Jane G. in Bellevue, WA. "If it's 2D information, just put it in writing and pass out a flyer. You the speaker are 3D, and as such are meant to deliver 3D information, i.e., that which



cannot be easily reduced to print. That includes jokes, passion, persuasion, criticism, logical arguments, analogies, charm, personal anecdotes, emotional graphics and physical movement. End strong with something that wakes them up and send them out repeating your ending. A moral of the story, the secret at the end of the chase, a twist on the conventional

wisdom or a surprise revelation."

(Mr. Rosner is the author of "The Boss's Survival Guide," McGraw Hill 2001, and "Working Wounded," Warner 2000, a speaker and founder of the award-winning Working Wounded.com and RetentionEvangelist.com. He is based in Seattle, Washington, USA. Email him at bob@workingwounded.com.)

Women in politics, business fare better in developing countries

UNITED NATIONS—Several developing countries, notably Caribbean island states, score far better than Italy and Japan in efforts to achieve equality between men and women, this year's UN Human Development Report said.

The Bahamas ranked 18th out of 70 countries on the gender empowerment measure (GEM) in the report, produced by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Italy came in 32nd, immediately behind

Botswana, and Japan was 44th.

The GEM is a composite evaluation based on the percentage of seats held by women in parliament, the proportion of women in senior official and managerial positions and in professional and technical jobs, and the ratio of female to male earned income.

Iceland led the list, followed by Norway, Sweden, Denmark and Finland. The United States ranked 10th, and Britain 17th.

Three members of the Euro-

pean Union were behind both the Bahamas and 20th-ranked Barbados-Portugal (21st), Italy (32nd) and Greece (40th)—but two other EU members, France and Luxembourg, did not provide enough data to be classified on the GEM.

"Many poor countries outperform far richer countries," the report said. "In terms of participation and inclusion, women fare better in Botswana, Costa Rica and Namibia than they do in Greece, Italy and Japan." By one

measure, the proportion of top posts-lawmakers, senior officials and managers-held by women, Lithuania (at 47 percent) did better than the United States (at 46 percent), the best-performing rich country on that score.

Women were better represented in the parliament of Costa Rica (35.1 percent of seats) than in all of the EU states except Sweden (45.3 percent), Denmark (38 percent) and Finland (36.5 percent).

The figures, a weighted aver-

age of seats in the upper and lower houses of parliament, were valid for March of this year.

Among developed countries, women lawmakers were thinnest on the ground in Greece (8.7 percent), Japan (10 percent) and Italy (10.3 percent). By contrast, they held 25.4 per-



cent of seats in Trinidad and Tobago and 21.4 percent in Namibia. AFP

Plans to outlaw age discrimination bared

LONDON—Britain unveiled on Wednesday plans to crack down on age discrimination in the workplace, notably by forcing companies to allow people to keep working until the age of 70.

Under the planned measures, announced by the Department of Trade and Industry and due to

take effect from 2006, employers would no longer be able to dismiss workers at a given age unless they can objectively justify the decision.

Instead a "default" retirement age of 70, at which employers could retire workers, would be introduced.

Employers will also be banned from advertising for "young and energetic" workers under the proposals, aimed at implementing a European Union directive.

"Age discrimination is the last bastion of lawful unfair discrimination in the workplace and it will be outlawed," Trade and In-

dustrial Secretary Patricia Hewitt said in a statement.

"In particular we must challenge the ageist assumption that younger employees make the best workers. It is a sad fact that thousands of people in their 40s and 50s who have been made redundant never work again." Research suggests that age discrimination costs Britain 16 billion pounds (23 billion euros, 27 billion dollars) a year, she added.

Though Hewitt insisted that the proposed legislation was not aimed at forcing people to work

longer, union leaders were quick to voice concern that the measures could do exactly that.

"We are all for an end to age discrimination, but we don't want to see people forced to work until they are 70," said Bob Crow, general secretary of the Rail Maritime and Transport Union.

"This could undermine occupational pension arrangements, which could lead to people working until they were 70, even if they don't want to," added Crow, a frequent critic of the Labour government.

At present in Britain workers can start drawing their state pension from the age of 60 for women and 65 for men, but there is no obligatory retirement date set by the government.

Instead the company usual sets its own retirement age. Most workers also top up their state pension with a private or company pension.

But an ageing population and the recent stock market slump has led to warnings that many British workers' pensions are woefully inadequate. AFP

'How can I...'

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willing to share with them and how you can project your strengths in "selling" yourself. Prepare your resume so that it spells out all your strong points as mentioned. Always state your job objectives and preferred line of work.

Equally important is the need to target your prospective employers, especially those that match your interest and professional skills. As a start, you may want to focus on companies that are involved in insurance, the motorcycle business or even the car industry, given your technical inclination. In particular, the local automotive industry has been growing aggressively of late and this can offer you a number of job

opportunities.

You may wish to be in a front-line job like a marketing- or sales-related position or be in the service department with your engineering background and technical inclination. A better course of action is just to be open for any opportunity that may come your way.

Nonetheless, you need to plan well your job search in a methodical manner, knowing who you really are and what you want, targeting your desired employers and engaging them in the hiring process. You will achieve this by sending your resume and asking for a job interview (as a good start) with your targeted companies. What these prospective em-

ployers will see in you depends a lot on what you are willing to show them. You are the captain of your ship.

In closing, you have quite a strong academic and work background. Do not forget to use all these to your advantage. Always be self-motivated, do finish your graduate studies, be persistent and good luck to your return to the employment world soon. All the blessings and smile a lot!

(Do you want to learn from Mr. Santiago's experiences? He, together with other topnotch CEOs, will give you career advice through this column. Send your requests for career advice to peopleatwork@inquirer.com.ph.)

MWM July issue on 'stage' moms now out

DON'T be surprised now, but this month's issue of Metro Working Mom magazine features top teen idol Heart Evangelista on the cover. No, she isn't a mother yet (obviously)—but the guiding force behind her stellar career is her mother, Cecil Ongpauco. They share this month's cover as Heart's mom talks about how she handles her daughter's career and how she almost didn't let her daughter join showbiz.

We did this 'showbiz mom' story in the belief that there lurks a 'stage mother' in all of us: trailing our kids to their karate

classes, clapping the loudest as they portray bit roles in a school play, or pounding them to study hard for the spelling bee. It's called moral support, but when does it start to affect our children negatively? Metro Working Mom intends to find out.

Also for the July issue we encourage you to choose to be happy in life. We want you to see that being happy is a choice and not a far-away 'someday when...' We try to define what 'having it all' means. Clue: it's choosing your priorities in relation to what kind of life you really want to lead.

The beauty and fashion pages are still jam-packed with cool new products and clothes that give you a sneak peek on what's to come. Makeup guru Fanny Serrano spills the beans on putting on makeup that stays all day. We explore all the kinds of makeup brushes and look for the best. For fashion, we urge you to rediscover the whites in your wardrobe.

Get your copy of Metro Working Mom today. For subscription inquiries, call 4152272 local 4655 or check out your local newsstands for a copy.

Managing your...

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keep improving and enhancing the way you do the tasks and in the process, you develop and actualize yourself and bring out all your potentials. There are even people who don't retire from a life-long career pursuit even if they are in their 60s. Look at doctors, lawyers, educators, pianists, painters. They move from independent contributors to become mentors and teachers of young apprentices and continue to contribute to the profession through research and writing, etc.

On the other hand, there are many more who join organizations and fill existing vacancies without considering their real fit to the job. They get stuck in career paths they don't like; every work day is drudgery. They look forward to weekends when they can be free for rest and recreation. "Oh, it's Monday again," they groan. "Thank God, it's Friday!", they exult.

Right organization, industry

Other important questions you need to get answers for before you accept a job offer are: Does the organization have a development culture? Does it have a succession planning system? How are talents developed? How are they retained?

You can get answers to these questions in a creative manner. Ask employees who have stayed on with the company for five years or more. Look at the people in the top positions. How did they get there? Were they developed? How? Or were they brought in by headhunters?

Succession planning is the process the organization uses to select and develop high potential employees for key positions. It is used to help organizations solve real business problems such as: "Who will move to CFO if the incumbent leaves/retires?" "Gerry can move

into one of three key positions but if we place him in one, who will fill the other two? And who will take over Gerry's position?"

Succession planning must be supported by a development culture where high potential people are given opportunities to choose their career path and to develop the desired and critical competencies through job postings, developmental assignments, mentoring and coaching, formal education and training programs, etc. Without a development culture, vacant positions are filled by newcomers hired through job hunters.

It is also important that you know the industry you are in and where you would like to work. We currently have 12 major industries: agriculture and fisheries; communication, information technology and electronics; construction; decorative arts; furniture and fixtures; garments;

health, social and other community development services; land transportation; maritime; metals and engineering; processed food and beverages; and tourism. Each major industry covers a wide array of industries.

Some careers are industry-specific such as architecture, nursing, physical therapy, hotel and restaurant, chemistry and chemical engineering, etc. Other careers are found across many industries such as general management, accounting, finance, marketing and sales, psychology.

Once you are where you should be, tackle how you can achieve your long-term goal, which is to be at the top of the organization. These are at least six important things you should focus your energies on:

1. Have before you the big picture; understand your organization's mission, vision and core

values, and your department's mission and vision. See if your personal mission, vision, and values are aligned with them.

2. Do an excellent job in your current position, using the criteria and standards of your external and internal customers.

3. Develop and enhance a strong positive relationship with your immediate superior, your boss.

4. Be an effective team player.

5. Manage office politics.

6. Continuous enhancement of your technical, cognitive and emotional (or EQ) competencies.

Focus on current job

Look at your present job. Review your job description. Sometimes your job description bears very little resemblance to what you are actually required to deliver. Check to make sure you are delivering the items in the job description. If there's a gap between

the reality and the job description, check it out with your boss. Is it the right one for you? Is there a fit between you and your job in terms of your interest, personality, your aptitudes and skills, your needs and values. If you are, then give it your all. Work at it with passion. Doing good work means not only delivering quality performance, but most important, knowing what quality performance is and the priorities of your various tasks. Your boss will define these.

Know who are your internal and external customers whose needs you must satisfy according to their standards and requirements. They are the reason why you have been hired and why you have those tasks.

Next Issue: Your boss is your most important customer!

(Ms. Santamaria is president of Career Systems, Inc. You can email her at carsys@qinet.net.)

PEOPLE at WORK

Editor Raul O. Marcelo
Subsection Editor Regina Galang Reyes

'How can I bounce back after a failed business?'

By Jerry F. Santiago
President and General Manager,
Kraft Foods Philippines Inc.

I GRADUATED from a prestigious school in Manila several years ago as a mechanical engineer. I took my board exam and fortunately passed it even before I formally graduated. My first job was for a non-life insurance company. I handled the technical analysis and recommendations of engineering and motorcar claims.

After working there for several months, I resigned and started a business. The business involved the sale of parts and accessories, repairs, engine modification, restoration and trading of various motorcycles. I personally managed it. And since I know a lot about motorcycles, I did the major jobs and personally supervised my technicians. It thrived for almost three years. Due to very stiff competition, bad economy, and an almost zero cash inflow on the last few months, I decided to close the shop to prevent further losses. That was when my problem started.

I've been trying to go back to being an employee. It's been almost two years and I am still un-

employed. Most of my applications didn't even interest the companies I applied to. And when I did get called for an interview, I was criticized for leaving my past employer for my business. Sometimes I think that my decision to move on to entrepreneurship was a mistake.

I am currently taking up my graduate studies to keep myself from being idle. My question is, do I still have a chance to work again? Why are employers making a big fuss about my failed business? If employers view my decision to open a business as a mistake, does this mean that I will be enduring this dilemma for the rest of my life?

Depressed and Frustrated

It is certainly understandable that you feel frustrated given the number of setbacks you have gone through lately. Who would not be? Hopefully, your depression is mild and more important, temporary. Many job seekers experience this same negative emotion, especially in the highly competitive job market.

The reality of our local employment market is that thousands graduate from the academe every year and a disproportionately

ASK YOUR CEO



lesser number of job vacancies are created. In other words, the employment market is limited and only has room for those who eventually qualify. However, there will always be opportunities for those who are the best match for the employment requirements. This is perhaps what you should plan for—getting a job match.

Know your strengths

The first step is to know what your real strengths are. Seeking employment is similar to doing a "selling job" of yourself. Instead of marketing the best features of a product, you are convincing your prospective target employers on your own best features.

Reading your letter, I noted that you have a number of strong points that you have to constantly articulate in your resume, in your job interviews and throughout the hiring process. It is also important to set yourself apart from the usual or average job applicant by knowing your unique strengths or competitive advan-

tage. The goal is to stand out amidst the crowd.

Always highlight your strong points, as follows: 1) being a graduate of a prestigious technical school (include as well involvements in any extra-curricular activities like the M.E. Society); 2) passing the Mechanical Engineering Board Exam; 3) currently, taking up graduate studies; 4) your strong personality traits; and lastly, 5) your work experiences. Given all these qualities, you will certainly be able to work again, but you need to work on it consistently.

Business experience

In discussing your work experience, it is important to focus on the two jobs you had. Both jobs had given you important competencies such as professional skills and knowledge of the insurance and motorcycle industries as well as specific job functions. An honest assessment of all the various things you have learned or skills you have acquired will be important in selling yourself. Highlight the three years you spent establishing and managing your motorcycle business. This experience would have given you invaluable learnings on all aspects of business, such as general ad-

ministrative work, marketing and selling, operations and engineering, and even finance or accounting-related tasks. I sense that your work also involved dealing with a lot of people, which would have enhanced your people skills. These are exposures that most graduates do not experience early in their careers. It can be your competitive advantage over other job applicants.

Bouncing back

I can understand that you may have regretted the years you spent managing your business and that the eventual business closure may have humbled you in the process. The important thing to remember is that we all learn from our experiences, good or bad, and we just have to move on with our life and career.

Most people have gone through similar setbacks and have bounced back. Although you may have perceived certain employers as frowning on your failed business, a number of other companies will be impressed with your experience and your determination to recover from this temporary setback. It shows a lot of maturity, stability and character for people who are able to rise from a fall, to conquer defeat and



CEO mentor Santiago

to overcome adversity.

Please do not forget to tell your prospective employers the fact that you are now taking up graduate studies, busying yourself while waiting for the right job opportunity. As a matter of fact, there are quite a number of employers, especially those hiring people for highly stressful and demanding jobs, who are hesitant to get candidates who only talk about success and have never experienced failure.

Your failed business should never be regarded as a "stigma" that will haunt you for the rest of your life. It remains to be a blessing that despite the failure, it has given you many important lessons. It has allowed you to mature faster than others. It has given you character.

The road ahead

How employers will look at you depend a lot on what you are

How can I/B0

Managing your career to the top

By Josie O. Santamaria

"Managing your career to the top" is the title of a learning session in the recently concluded People at Work Live! Seminar Series on Career Development Strategies. The session included a lecture by the author and a panel discussion by chair Emily Abrera of McCann Erickson, Dean Nieves Confesor of AIM, CEO Gary Teves of Land Bank of the Philippines and CEO Carlos Ejercito of Unilab. This article, which will be published in four parts, distills the learnings from that session.)

WHAT do you feel when someone you know, perhaps a former classmate, gets promoted to a high executive position like CEO or COO? Admiration? Awe? Envy? Bitter? We say "Wow!" when we see their posh offices and the top-of-line BMW or the Mercedes Benz driven by a chauffeur. We see them pass us by in the airport passenger departure area as they walk towards the first class or business class cabin. We admire their homes in posh subdivisions.

Some will say, "Someday, I'll be like that too, and enjoy those things also."

As you go beyond the wishing stage, however, the first thing you need to do is to make sure that "up" is where you really want to go, that you know what's "up" there, and what you have to give "up" when you are "up" there.

Trade-off

For sure, there are many trappings that go with power and high status: prestige, recognition, lots of money, international travel, perks and benefits. But, weigh the benefits with the costs. You also get a great deal of pressure and stress that can rob you of living and enjoying life to the fullest. As the top man in the organization, you are responsible for the success or failure of your company. If you can't deliver to the stockholders the bottom line figure, your head is the first to roll. Your accountabilities are so overwhelming you have to give up a lot of things that are just as important to you: peace of mind, quality time with your spouse and children, time with

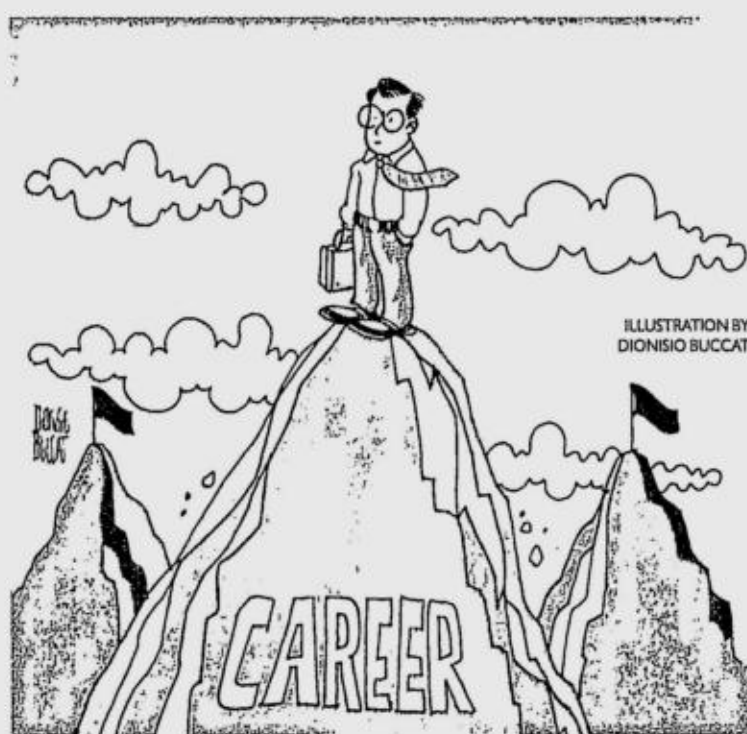


ILLUSTRATION BY DIONISIO SUCCAT

your parents and siblings, time to serve God and your community. You miss out on fun times with your kids or the important milestones in their lives. You can't go

back in time when you realize they are grown-ups and so different from you. Spider Man says it all: "With great power comes great responsibilities."

Nonetheless, if "up" is where you want to go, then manage your career so that you will get to the top in your 40s. You should be in a senior management position by early or mid 30s. Manage your career strategically just as organizations do their annual strategic planning. Be clear about your long-term goal and actively manage your work life in a constantly changing global environment, dealing with stiff competition, rapid changes in technology and unpredictable socio-economic and political crises.

To get to the top, it is important that you are in the right career, in the right job, in the right organization and in the right industry.

Right career, job

You have to be sure you are in the right career. To do this, make sure that the nature of the tasks and responsibilities fit your interests, your personality, your temperament, your talents and enable you to use the aptitudes and skills you enjoy using.

Once you are sure you are in the right career, then seek and accept

job assignments that are in line with this career. If you have decided that IT is the career you like, and you had taken an IT course in college such as computer science, computer engineering, mathematics, then seek jobs in IT. Reject those not in IT. If you have decided that marketing is your career choice, then apply for and accept positions in sales and marketing.

The right career is relative to your present status in life. The right career now that you are young and single, may not be the right one for you in middle age with a growing family because your interests, needs and values do change.

Many people have jobs but don't have careers. They even retire from jobs but have never been in a career. A job is what you do from day to day, five days a week, according to the tasks laid out for you. A career is a set of tasks that you are enthusiastic about, and is passionate about doing. You want to improve and be good at doing them. So you

Managing/B0

Stairs of customer loyalty is key to higher profitability

By Dr. Tony Alessandra

MANY companies follow the same formulas for bringing them closer to what they think their customers really want. Concepts like "customer focus" and "customer satisfaction" are warmly embraced. Today, who isn't focusing on satisfying customers?

Standing out

However, in today's ultra-competitive marketplace, if you're doing what everybody else is, you'll never get to where you want to be. It is incumbent for companies to set themselves apart from the rest of the competition.

If your company is going to be a leader in your market, you are going to have to really practice things like "customer intimacy," "customer interaction," "customer loyalty" and perhaps more important—"customer partnership."

Partnership is a single-thread relationship. It is being "one." Such a relationship is built upon a mutually agreed-upon plan that reflects the nature and needs of all parties involved. This is not a rewording of old terminology or a redefining of the same, tired concepts of "sales and service." Instead, it is a paradigm shift, mov-

ing away from transactional customer satisfaction and towards permanent customer loyalty.

Wasteful strategy

In order to achieve success in the New Economy, your company must develop the needed skills to develop long-term relationships with their best customers. Too often, however, the constant push to increase sales and market share leads companies away from their current customers and, instead, towards finding new ones. Such a strategy is a terrible waste of time and money.

The most effective way to assure the growth in profitability that every company wants is to turn their already-existing customers into "apostles."

For far too many companies today, the overriding focus of their growth strategy is on increasing sales and market share. This is eerily similar to what I experienced when I was working my way through college selling cookware door to door. As a beginning salesperson, I naively believed the best way for me to make more money was to make more sales.

Developing "apostles"

The foolish dedication to this

premise led me to ignore my past customers in favor of always finding new ones. It was only afterwards, when I found myself working harder than ever before and making less money for the time I invested, that I realized my strategy was wrong. Unfortunately, many companies today are acting and thinking like I did over thirty years ago. They dedicate far more of their resources to expanding sales at the expense of their already existing clientele.

Since 1974, while working with some of the smartest and most successful companies across America, I have learned that the ability to convert new sales into "apostles" for the company is the best path towards stable, long-term growth. Moreover, I have recognized which skills are needed to accomplish this task.

Stairs

The stairs of customer loyalty is the process which, in a simple, straightforward manner, shows you how to convert your prospects into sales, and then to customers, and finally, into apostles, who are a group of raving fans who will "preach your message" and "sing your praises" to the marketplace.

Possessing the right marketing skills is crucial in properly identifying the right kinds of prospects for a company. Smart companies accomplish this responsibility by profiling the top twenty percent of their current customers who typically provide eighty percent of their profits.

Criteria like profitability, frequency of purchase, after-sales service required, revenue, and loyalty potential are quantified and used as measuring devices in determining the most important characteristics of a company's best, most potentially loyal customers.

Wrong 20 percent

Looking for new business is very expensive. Therefore, companies need to avoid the wrong kinds of prospects for them. Just as it is critical in distinguishing the attributes of the right prospects, a company needs to outline the characteristics that make-up the bottom twenty percent of their customer base.

Anybody in business can easily recognize whom the complainers, price-grinders, and transaction-oriented clients are. By clearly understanding the bad traits of those bottom 20 percent,

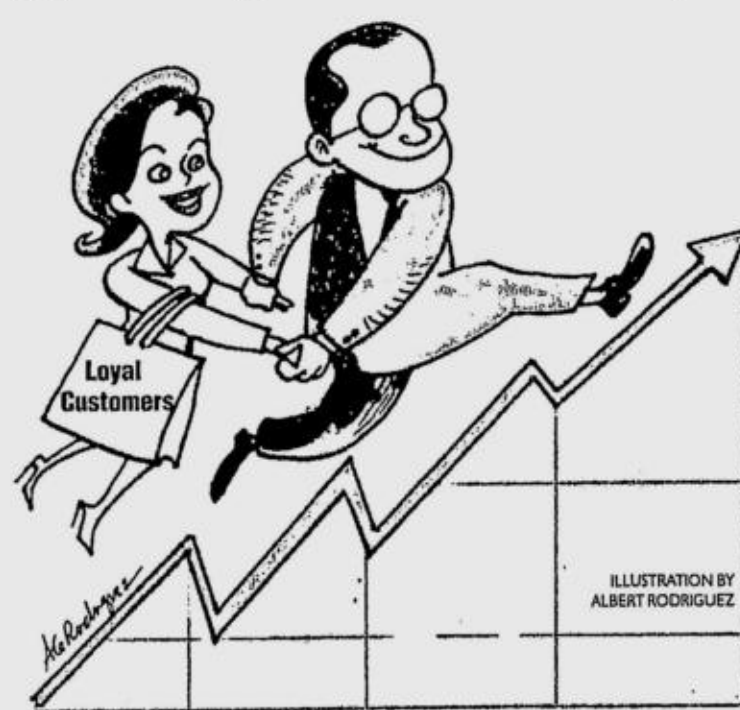


ILLUSTRATION BY ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

companies can much easier avoid the wrong prospects and focus their resources on the upper 20 percent instead.

The "20/80 Rule" works at the bottom of the customer base as well. That is, 20 percent of a company's customers more than likely cost more to handle than they're worth. These customers give more grief; chew

up more time with requests and complaints; and, generally, cause the most stress for a company.

(To be continued next week: The Steps to Successful Sales)

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GYPSY QUEEN. Savannah Lumen, rising music star



THE SHERIFF. Marco Borlongan, NBC boss man



JOEY'S PALS. Bell Bautista and Jett Carpio



FIRE UP. Bi-Anne Tupas in gear



COWBOYS LIVE! Jooney Magdaluyo and Juni Licaros



LISSOME. Yeng Lim



STYLE PLUS. Jun-Jun Ablaza



RODEO ROMANCE. Erika Alba and Joma Manas

PHOTOS BY TIM YAP



JOEY'S ROMANCE. Shaan Bermudez and Vince Hizon



MOD MOMENT. Sandra Seifert and Hans Eckstein



MTV's most wanted VJ Johan Ekedum



WORLD PERKS. Adin Gonzales and Michael Go



ROYAL couple Francis and Mary Ann Lumen



FLEXIN' USA. Show off those abs in Mossimo shirts

Cowboys and chicks, and then some

"EEEEHHHAAWW!" It started with a scream, as hostess Shaan Bermudez let out her lasso of tricks to kick-start the barn dance.

In a city that worships electronica and R&B beats and thrives on speed, it's quite refreshing to sit back and do something chic-ly old-fashioned.

Joey 92.3 had this exactly in mind when it threw its annual "Froth of July" party, this time with country/western as the theme.

So, complete with a southern drawl, cowboy jacket and a sheriff's pin, I hopped onto my horse and rode toward the NBC Tent, which Jun-Jun Ablaza transformed into one giant barn, complete with oak barrels, swinging doors, even hay!

I felt like I was transported into the set of a Colt 45 commercial.

Later, Shaan hosted more games and played with the audience—a mishmash of yuppies, advertising types, students and Joey sponsors.

If Ms Bermudez is blooming, it's because, as we all know by now, she is set to become Ms. Vince Hizon! Yup, the wedding is set for the end of the year.

Spank me

I spotted Vince somewhere in the audience, watching her fiancée's hosting skills from afar, and I remembered that same time last year, I was chatting with them at the same event.

At that time, they had only started seeing each other, and Shaan wasn't sure about him. Then last month, Vince proposed to Shaan on national television right before a PBA game. How romantic could you get?

Back to the event, Mossimo showcased its denim line, and designer Edwin Uy presented his cowboys-and-chicks collection of leather and lace applique leisure wear, which ended with a wedding gown!

Surreal as it was, it was well-received, especially since it was model-of-the-moment Sandra Seifert who walked the gown down the catwalk.

While Freestyle rocked the barn, I hopped onto the food tents, munching on the yummy



Tim Yap

treats such as Muscle Beach's corn dog and coffee from Seattle's Best, while observing the cowgirls work the room, making the boys whistle as they passed by.

Joey's Ria Romero came in a sexy camouflaged top and a denim mini. But what made her "Cowgirl Lara Croft" outfit hotter was her whip! Nothing better than a girl

who knows how to spank.

Jett Carpio and Asia Brewery's Jun Alcantara wore ponchos (not Rhett Eala, mind you) and both Bianne Tupas and hot chick Maui Pascual wore plaid. No damsel would be in distress with Marco Borlongan, who played the night's sheriff.

I left right before they called on the night's winner for a Northwest trip for two to Texas, as my horse needed to rush to another venue.

"Hi-ho, Silver—away!"

More bells

The weekend brought me to my usual Greenbelt and Malate hop.

Friday night was the Vibe anniversary at Wasabi—with lines stretching from Makati Avenue up to Eastwood. Goes to show how popular R&B and hip hop are these days—a backlash to everything posh. Then again, it's different strokes for different folks.

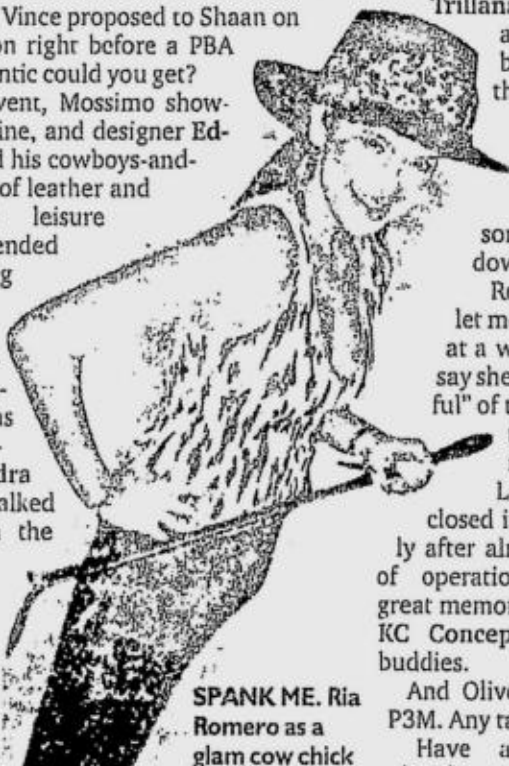
I was at Nuvo having my bellini when I spotted some pretty girls who excitedly greeted me with hugs. Rose Montenegro and Michi Valeriano, who both had dinner at Restaurant 12, told me about the engagement of Celine Gabriel to Chris Tuason (a January 2004 wedding is in the works), and of Tina Trillana to Cary Lagdameo (who are set to tie the knot December 2004). Best wishes to them!

Saturday and straight to Bed I went. Bed seems to be the hot spot these days for urbanites looking for some fresh, let-your-hair-down action.

Recently, this lady journalist let more than just her hair down at a weeknight party. Let's just say she had more than a "soap-fu" of the bouncers in bikinis that were hired that night. Attagirl.

Last week, Shiraz closed its doors officially after almost two years of operations. "We had great memories there," said KC Concepcion and her buddies.

And Olive is for sale, at P3M. Any takers? Have a super week ahead, partyphiles.



SPANK ME. Ria Romero as a glam cow chick



CHICK times two for Mossimo's denim collection



INDIAN summer for Edwin Uy



EDWIN Uy's opener



MOSSIMO MAN. Actor-slash-professor Carlo Maceda



MUSCLE BEACH. Miguel Zabala at the Tent



The yin and yang of friendship:

A photo essay

Text and Photos by Catherine Young
2bUI Correspondent

THE CHINESE believe in yin and yang—a term that supports the concept of balance.

In many ways, friendship exemplifies this. It has a yin: the moments of conflict where friends fight, as well as a yang: the happy moments where friends come through for one another.

In the end, it is their bond that will sustain

them through the difficulties they encounter. Meet Jorel, Caissa, James, Joanne and Crick—five pre-med students whose friendship helps them get through the rigorous training of college.

Five different personalities—the diva, the fashionista, the sweetheart, the athlete and the punk—became united as friends in pursuit of a noble field: medicine.

When they're not hitting the books or dissecting their specimens, they also know how to have a little fun.

This photo essay is the output of friends who came through for each other in spite of limited time and resources. We may have

It is their bond that sustains them through difficulties

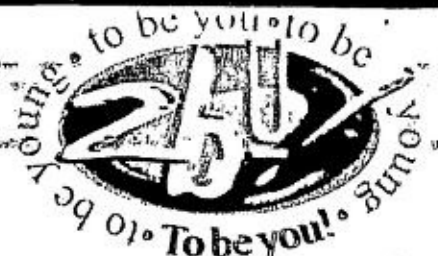
pulled an all-nighter, we may not have had any makeup artist or lighting director, but we did everything ourselves and had a lot of fun. Work did not seem like work because we were in each other's company.

At the end of the day, one thing was once more reaffirmed: it is definitely more fun to work with friends.

Models/ subjects: Jorel Lazaro, Caissa Tangco, James Muyargas, Joanne Santos and Crick Manotok of Cal Catly's J

E-mail the author at cathy_young1@yahoo.com





2BU! SURVEY

Which celebrity would make the best or worst friend?

By Maui V. Reyes
2BU! Correspondent

WE'VE always dreamt of being buddies with a celebrity. Who wouldn't want to walk the red carpet at an awards show, or get first dibs on premiere tickets to meet other hot dishes in the spotlight?

Then again, we also wished we could be the ones to slap those *kontrabidas* on TV, or get into a catfight—hair-pulling and all—with those gorgeous stars who managed to nab our celeb crushes.

2BU! asked you: Which celebrity do you think would make the best or worst friend?

Derek Zoolander. He's the best friend whom you can take with you when you go shopping, but he's also the worst when it comes to helping you out with problems.—Samara Aguilar, 20

Worst friend imaginable? Definitely April Boy Regino! Just imagine having to look at his face and having to watch his gigs! Ugh! Sends chills down my spine! Ptoooooey!—Alakakok, 19

Chito Miranda of Parokya ni Edgar would be a cool, funky best friend, while Carlos Agassi could damage your

eardrums with the way he raps.—Lawrence Lee, 19

David Fisher [of the show "Six Feet Under"]. Nate Fisher's hot, but he gets kind of boring. David seems like he's got a lot of fun in him, and he's just waiting to let it out.—Carmela Sison, 21

Claudine Barretto, because she's got it all. And despite all the things that she's been through in life, when I met and worked with her, she was so down to earth!—Rico Robles, 21

Sandra Bullock. She seems like she'd make a good friend. Local artist, definitely Osang. Ang kwela niya, eh.—Sanya Faustmann

Karen Mok from the movie "So Close" because she's such a chick! And worst would be Judy Ann Santos because I just don't like her.—Troy Monsod, 22

Tom Welling... to have a buddy that is such a major hottie... It's like "superman dating!"—Libby "Twinkle" Morales, 20

Obvious ba? Jolina Magdangal would be my best friend! Because it's written in the stars!—Mich Dulce

Mabel Reyes, the courtside reporter of the PBA on IBC coverage. Being friends with her would make the male populace envy me! She's hip, she's nice, she's cool, she's sexy and, most of all, she's so damn beautiful. So beautiful I could stare at her all day long.—Pao Minh Tzu, 19

Football star David Beckham, because



ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

he has the nicest haircuts.—Yan Yuzon, 25

Giselle Sanchez would make a great friend because she's got a great sense of humor, is down to earth, and likes rock music. And I wouldn't want to have Maegan Aguilar as a friend because she is a spoiled brat and likes to start catfights in bars, like what happened between her and Annabel Bosch.—Michelle

F4 members para puro cute ang mga kasama ko.—Shahani Gania

Aubrey Miles. Kasi mabuti ang puso niya.—Yael Yuzon

Luis Manzano. A big body for the big boys out there.—Jewelyn Capones, 20

Best friend: Chris Tiu. So I can learn how to play basketball from one of the best.—Muckflurry, 15

Molly Ringwald in her "Sixteen Candles" days would make a really cool friend. She's pretty, too.—Wacky Acosta, 20

Gusto ko maging best friend si Top Cat kasi marami siyang nalulusutang problema at palaging may chicks!—Jorel, 21

Kuya Germs. Because if he can make stars, he can un-make them.—Jugs Juguet

Piolo Pascual, because the whole show-biz thing doesn't get to his head. He's one person probably no one can ev-

er resist.—Daphne Torio, 19

Freddie Prinze Jr. I think he's so down to earth! Worst would be Carlos Agassi. I hate his attitude, he seems *maya-bang*!—Tepteptaz, 20

Donita Rose. She's open-minded, care-free and sincere. Being God-loving is another major plus. My ultimate crush would sure make a great friend.—Gelo-coms

The celebrity that would make the best friend would be Michael Rosenbaum as Lex Luthor. He may not have many friends, but he knows what friendship is about: Trust and loyalty.—Ody, 19

My favorite literary friends

From page C4

tion she hates, Wendy usually comes to her rescue.

Is uninhibited about showing how important you are. Okay, maybe Harris in "Harris and Me" by Gary Paulsen has a pretty crude way of showing it, telling a girl his cousin likes that the cousin is dimwitted, but he unashamedly admits that it's because he likes hanging out with this boy and doesn't want a girl to ruin their fun. In the end, when the cousin is about to go home, Harris goes up to him, frankly bawling, and offers to hide him in the middle of the cornfield.

Is loyal. Can you actually expect anybody to be unconditionally loyal to you? There's the factor of influence and reasoning, so it's difficult to expect unwavering loyalty from friends no matter what.

But books have shown that loyalty is a virtue that dogs specialize in. Even the former savage dog Rontu displays amazing devotion to the Indian girl Karana in Scott O'Dell's "Island of the Blue Dolphins."

Is self-revealing. Zylpha Keatley Snyder always writes great stories about friendship, but my personal favorite is "The Changeling," whose main character is my namesake.

Ivy Carson endeavors to share all her secrets and dreams with Martha Abbott, in the process drawing the other girl out of her shell. It's nice to have somebody in your life whom you know so well and who knows you just as much.

Has confidence in your goodness. Imagine finding yourself in a situation where your best friend is suspected of a horrible crime and, on top of that, is struck speechless, so you can't verify if the charges against him are correct.

Connor displays immense trust in Branwell and never doubts his friend's innocence for a moment as he seeks the truth and helps Branwell break down his wall of silence in E.L.

Konigsburg's "Silent to the Bone."

•Looks out for you. In Betsy Byars' "Cracker Jackson," Cracker and his buddy Goat go through a series of mishaps, trying to save Cracker's ex-babysitter Alma from her abusive husband. Cracker just naturally assumes that he has to do something to help Alma.

Wants what's best for you. In Johanna Spyri's "Heidi," her little companion is practically the only bright spot in Clara's life, but when she discovers that Heidi is unhappy in the city and misses her life with her grandfather, Clara asks her father to arrange to have Heidi returned to the Alps.

Brings out the best in

you. Such is the story of friendship in "The Bridge to Terabithia" by Katherine Paterson. Before Leslie came, Jess used to be an oddball loser who drew silly pictures and ran around a field, trying to act big to cover up his fears, but Leslie introduces him to the land of his talent and together they create a wonderful place called Terabithia, where Leslie makes up stories that Jess gets to illustrate.

Is a kindred spirit. Right after Noah, Nadia and Ethan proceed to Julian's place to have tea,

The Souls are born. Even if these characters in E.L. Konigsburg's "The View from Saturday" have varying interests, they all have that certain quality that allows them learn how to do things in unison, but without the usual harshness of uniformity.

People have different notions of what an ideal friend is like. Maybe you could take or leave some of the traits listed above, add to it, or altogether scrap the whole thing because your taste for friendship runs along a totally different line.

All I know is that reading about these characters not only enhanced my view of friendship and showed me the essential points to look for, but more importantly, they taught me how I myself could be a good friend to others.



Making friendships last

From page C1

Other general tips:

• Remember that friends are "more permanent" than the people you date. Keep this in mind when you're forced to choose. Friends will see you through different girl/boyfriends, and decades later, when you're way past your infatuation, you'll probably still be in touch with them while you couldn't care less about what's-his-or-her-name.

• Don't think your friends are possessions. Don't smother them and act as though you have exclusive rights to them. Let them make other friends while you do the same.

• Look for things to do together, especially when your activities hardly cross paths anymore.

• Display genuine interest in what is happening to your friends. Don't be too self-ab-

sorbed as to think that the only news worth discussing during get-togethers is yours.

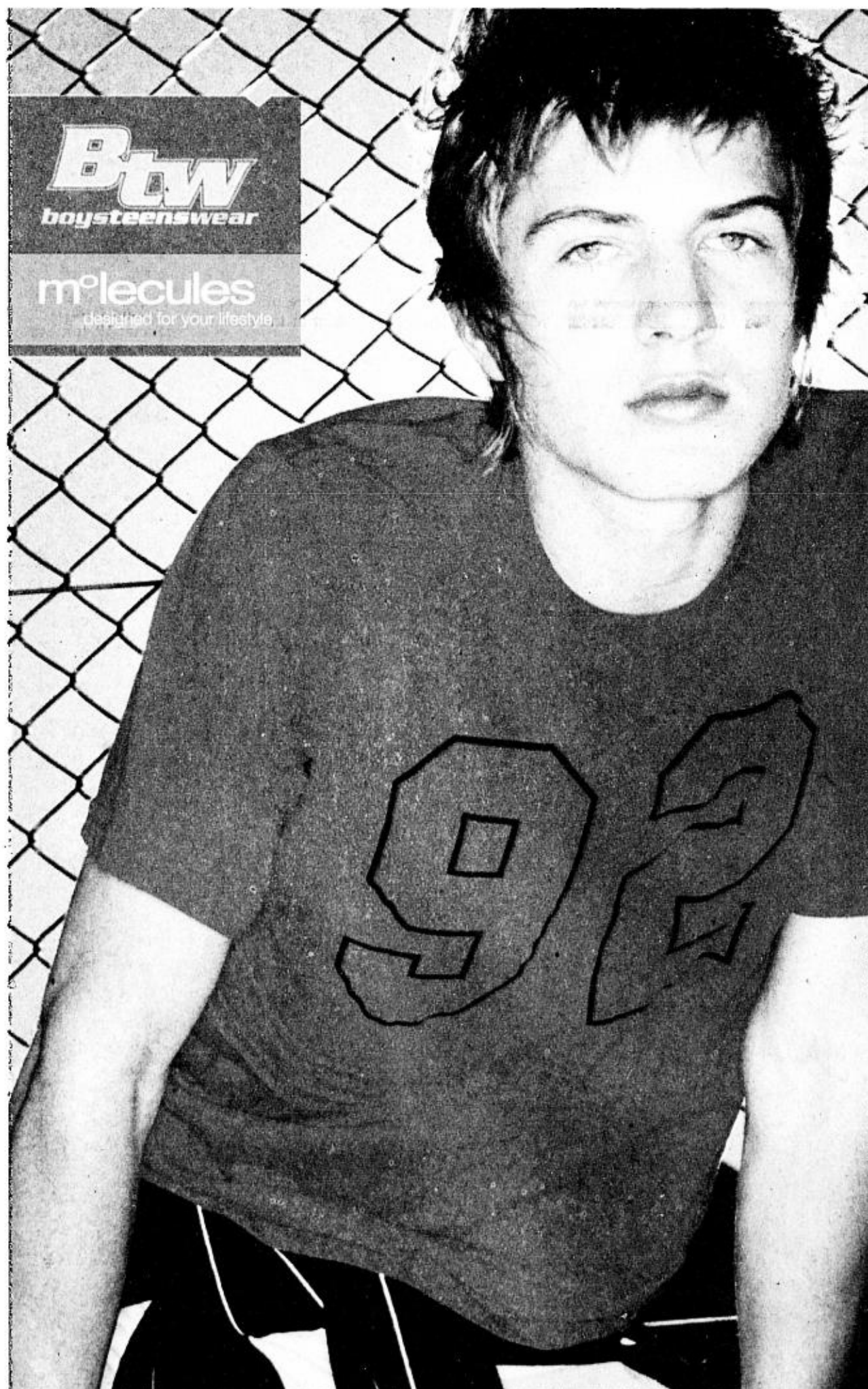
• Don't expect your friends to be just like you. They have different tastes and standards, and to impose your own on them is plain unfair. Nobody enjoys being around high-maintenance people.

The sad fact is, there isn't any way to guarantee a friendship. Sometimes, you've already done everything you could to salvage one, but it continues to slip away from you.

A lasting friendship requires work from both parties. Your own efforts depend on how much the relationship means to you.

When a friendship ends, it's okay to feel bad about it, but there's really not much to do except to give it closure. Be grateful for it just the same, however short-lived it was.

After all, friendships, no matter their time span, always enrich our lives.



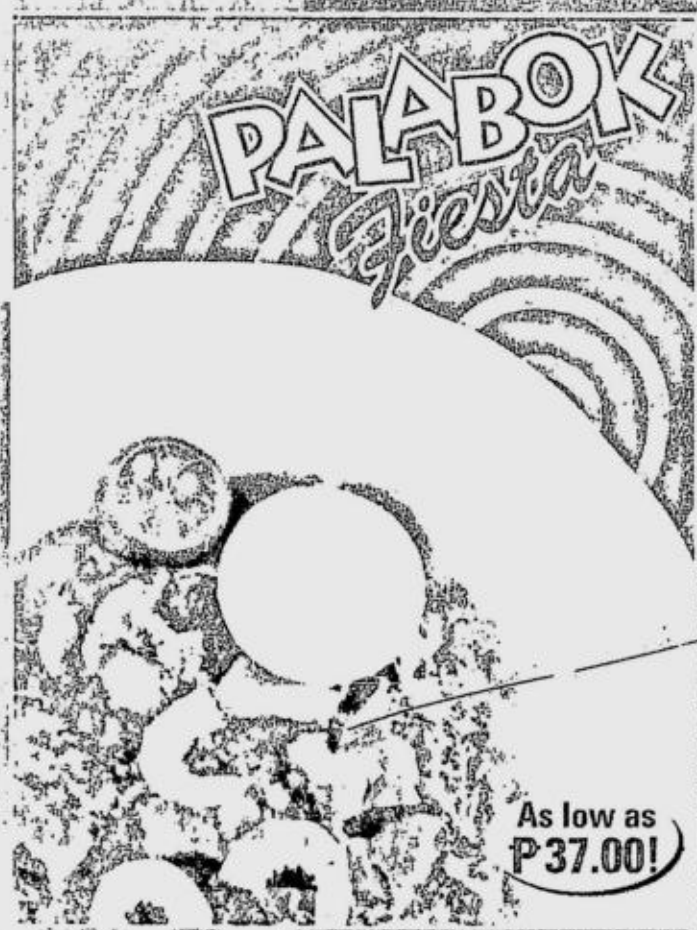
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My favorite literary friends

By Ivy S. Papa
2bUI Correspondent

ASIDE from being some of my best companions when I was growing up, books were also able to reveal to me some nuances of friendship that would have taken me longer to discover by myself.

One of the things I've learned from reading books is the concept of a good friend. A lot of times, I regret that the people I read about are merely fictional characters, because it would have been marvelous to have them as chums in real life.

However, from all the extraordinary friendships I have observed and the amazing characters I have encountered in these stories, I've formed my own ideas of what an ideal friend should be like.

Here are some of the traits I've come up with and the characters that inspired their inclusion in the list.

A friend:

Is easy to be with. No two people are the same, and this diversity can often cause friction. It's a great thing when friends can be comfortable in each other's company despite their differences. A nice example is the rapport in Louise Fitzhugh's "Harriet, the Spy" between Harriet, who's snoopy and wants to become a writer; Sport, who likes football and wants to become an accountant; and Janie, who's got a mad scientist thing going on and wants to blow up the planet. Despite their divergent inclinations, they continue to

Fictional characters can teach us a thing or two about what a good friend should be—and how we can respond in kind

be good friends.

Is plain wonderful. Astrid Lindgren's "Pippi Longstocking," who's best remembered as the girl with flip-away braids, makes life more fun and exciting for her friends. I sure wouldn't complain if I could find somebody who likes to give gifts, cook meals and lead me off to one crazy adventure after another.

Knows how to share. If I were an orphan who was maltreated by my closest relatives, I sure would appreciate a boy who's willing to share everything with me, especially if this boy doesn't have much. The best thing that Ron Weasley can share with Harry Potter is



ILLUSTRATIONS: ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

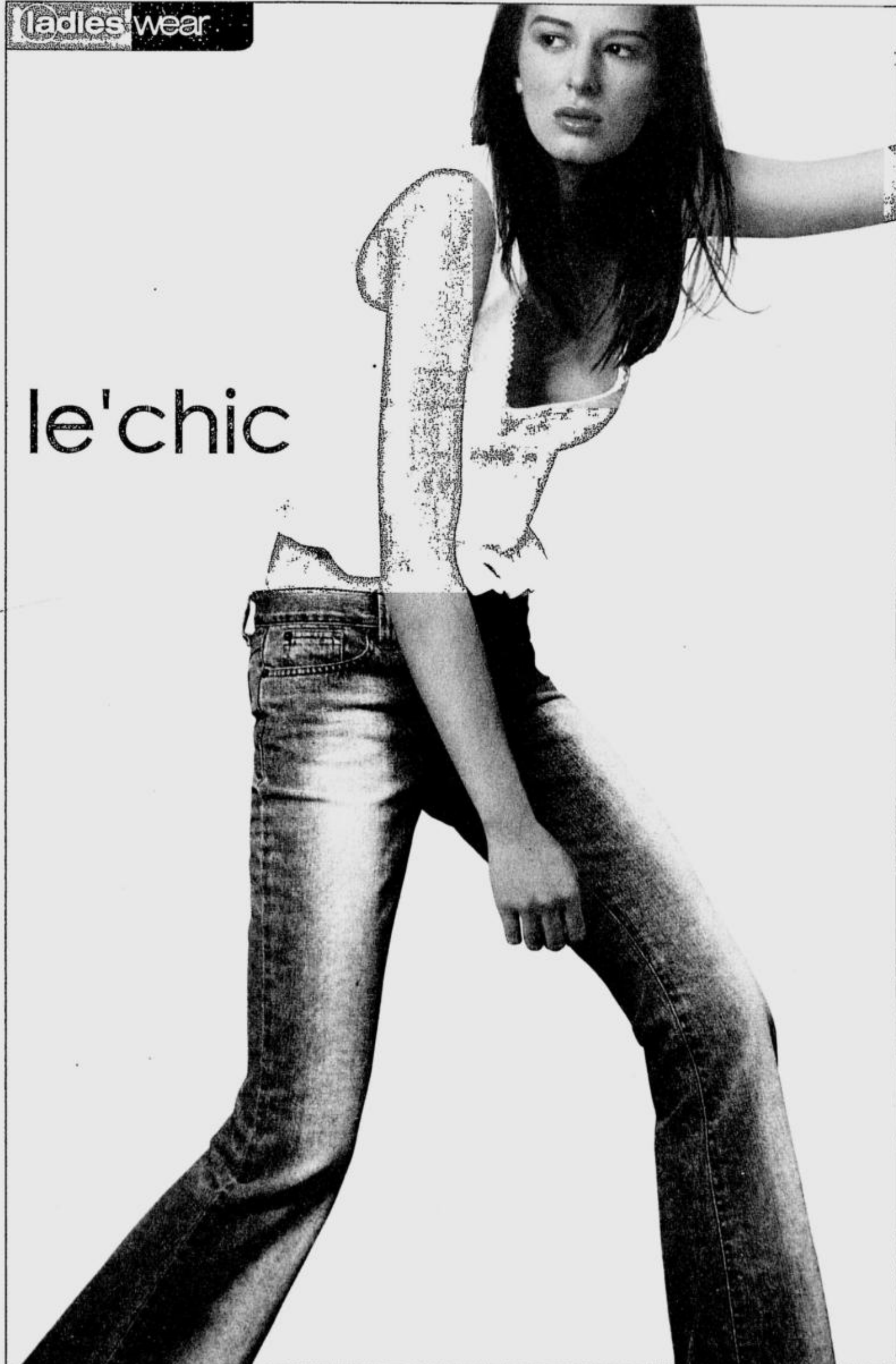
his family. In the series by J.K. Rowling, both boys display admirable generosity toward each other—Harry, in the form of material things, and Ron, in the form of the abundant love he receives from his parents and siblings.

Understands and accepts you. Sara Holland and Wendy White are friends in Ann Martin's "Stage Fright." Sara is impossibly shy and introverted, but Wendy never forces her to do anything she doesn't want to do, even though this might be frustrating for Wendy because she herself is spunky and outgoing. In fact, whenever Sara is pushed into a situa-

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LIFE ST 2bU!

The real deal on Michelle Branch



"A LITTLE bit of this..." The diva of Grammy duets

2bU! gets her to spill about her new album, those nasty rumors, and more duet partners in the future

By Maui V. Reyes
2bU! Correspondent

BACK in 2001 when Linkin Park ruled and people were still obsessing over Britney's "I'm a Slave for U" video, a brunette armed with a guitar started singing at the top of her lungs about seeing her crush "everywhere."

It was either the downfall of Nu Metal or the almost yawn-inducing repetitive pelvic thrusts on TV that made people listen: Who is this girl with the red guitar, and is she another packaged artist from Florida?

Artists such as Sheryl Crow and Carlos Santana have called her "the real deal."

At 20, Michelle Branch pretty much has everything a newcomer could ask for: 2.5 million copies of her major label debut, "The Spirit Room," a Grammy and MTV Video Music Award under her belt (to name a few of the many awards she has), sold-out tours with Sheryl Crow, a Carlos Santana duet and a long-running Billboard Top 100 record ("The Spirit Room" lasted 82 weeks on the charts).

Driven by the music of the Beatles, Jimi Hendrix and Led Zeppelin, Branch picked up a guitar and started writing songs at the age of 14. After releasing an independent album in 2000 titled "Broken Bracelet," Branch signed on to Maverick Records, shelved out the album "The Spirit Room," and the rest is history.

Now with a new album, "Hotel Paper," Branch is ready to show the world she's more than a one-hit wonder (as most teen pop stars come).

Produced by Jon Levinthal, who twiddled the knobs on Shawn Colvin's work, and Josh Abraham, who helped Staind and Korn come up with spanking albums, you can expect a more diverse sophomore effort from the young musician.

Guest musicians are also sprinkled on this little gem, along with Sheryl Crow and David Campbell.

Get the real deal on Michelle Branch as 2bU! gets her to spill about her album, those nasty rumors and the possibility of even more duets in the future.

The songs in "The Spirit Room" were written when you were 14. What are a few things you have experienced since then that influenced the songwriting in the second album?

New independence. Realizing everyone is

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BY JESS ABRERA

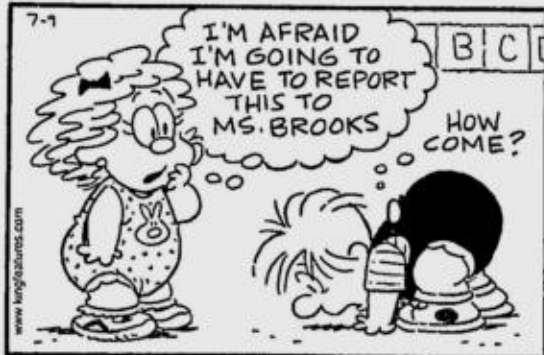


MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG

PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR



BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT

MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL



ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO

DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS



HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You have a curious, inventive mind. Because you are interested in a wide variety of subjects, you will influence the world around you. You are independent but a good team player as well. You want to understand how things work, and you often master a specific technique. Many important choices face you in the year ahead.
Birthday of: Courtney Love, actress/musician; Tom Hanks, actor; Jimmy Smits, actor.

- ARIES (March 21 to April 19):** This is a good day to focus on home and family concerns. All things domestic are your top priorities now. This also applies to family businesses.
- TAURUS (April 20 to May 20):** Be careful that you do not overbook. Four planets make this a very busy time in your life. You have places to go, things to do, people to see.
- GEMINI (May 21 to June 20):** Your possessions take on an extra meaning for you now. You might feel that you are what you own. You certainly want more control of your life through your possessions.
- CANCER (June 21 to July 22):** It's all right to put yourself first now. You need to focus on your needs because you are setting off on a big journey. It's a whole new world for you now.
- LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22):** You definitely need more time for peace, quiet and solitude. Try to sneak away somewhere today—for at least half an hour—for special time just for you.
- VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22):** Your dealings with friends and groups are very important now. Someone older or more experienced might challenge you. Turn this around and arrange things so you both win. It's possible.
- LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22):** For some reason, you are in the public eye more than usual. Others notice you. This makes you responsible for setting the proper tone and example for others.
- SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21):** Any kind of diversion or short trip will please you now. You want to broaden your horizons and expand your mind through travel and study. Do whatever you can!
- SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21):** You are unusually focused on the possessions or responsibilities you share with others now. Your true task is to learn to compromise with values that do not agree with yours.
- CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19):** Listen carefully to what close friends and partners are trying to tell you now. This is an important time to cement agreements and acknowledge your respect for someone.
- AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18):** You will not regret putting out hard effort and work now. Whatever you do will definitely bring you a payoff in the future. Be assured of that.
- PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20):** Romance, the arts and the entertainment world are a major focus now. So are children. (Children simply want your love and protection.)

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- One of David's songs
- Outdo
- Not quite closed
- Big name in aluminum
- Palo Alto, CA
- Actress Campbell
- Crook
- Dancer Verdon
- Mammal's triplets?
- Start to eat
- Warning signal
- Supplied to excess
- Bombards
- Illuminated by an old flame
- Like a couch potato
- Deathly pale
- Jewish feast
- Bounce
- Demonstrate
- Manner of performance
- Small change
- Get-up-and-go
- Blender setting
- Stout and portier
- Tea of "Flirting with Disaster"
- Had a mind (to)
- Peels
- Not worth consideration
- Robust
- Egghead
- "Who's Boss?"
- Pot entrance fee
- Crook
- Color changer
- Southernmost Great Lake
- Draws closer
- Corn units
- Doe or buck
- White heron

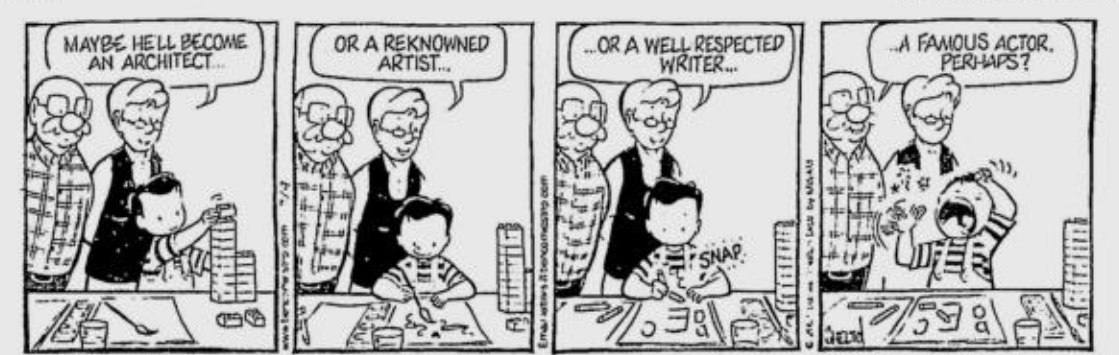
By Robert H. Wolfe
North Woodmere, NY

DOWN

- Kind of dunk
- Play parts
- Tennis stroke
- Insincerely emotional
- Loose-fitting
- "Dallas" matriarch
- Do nothing
- Rocky outcrop
- Fisherman
- Crook
- Slave off
- Income from properties
- Free-for-all
- Copycat
- Ball of yarn
- Pant
- U.S. tennis stadium honoree
- Crook
- Born in Marselles
- Denude
- Hole in a needle
- Katz of "Hocus Pocus"
- Dennis the Menace, e.g.
- Daylight
- Moist with morning drops
- Nosegay
- With no exceptions
- Comes in
- Rile up
- Cast a shadow
- African nation
- Putter Palmer
- L.A. cager
- Skier's ride
- This place
- In the past, in the past
- of roses
- Request charity

BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON



MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO



KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA



LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO



TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING



More beauty problems

I UNOFFICIALLY declare the last seven days Beauty Nightmare Week. Besides my waking up every day to discover either a zit of unbelievably gargantuan proportions (my monthly post-menstrual one), or under-eye circles that seem to have developed an immunity to eye cream and concealer, the entire kikay community apparently had their medicine cabinets and vanity drawers working overtime as well.

No, I have not installed surveillance cameras atop every dresser in Manila. I know this because my other job is to play beauty shrink to anyone with a bad-hair day, a bad case of acne, and God knows what else—through my very convenient, very accessible, 24-hour “office”: my e-mail. I’ve picked out some favorites—requests and queries I know are shared by an entire population of beauty problem-plagued men and women. Welcome to my office, take a seat, and learn a kikay thing or two.

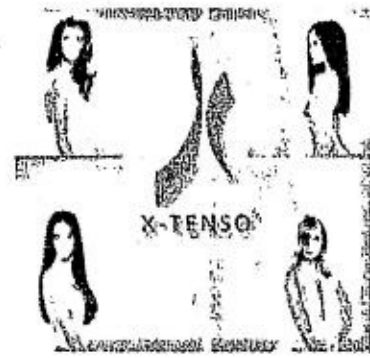
I’m in my late teens and I haven’t really encountered any major problems with my skin. I’d get the occasional pimple, a breakout even, but nothing as bothersome as the whiteheads that seem to be permanent fixtures on my face! I tried those pore strips to get rid of the ones on my nose, and am using a



Lora Gabol

scrub every day, but they’re still there! Please help.

Those little whiteheads poking from under your otherwise flawless face need a dose of exfoliation. “But I’ve been scrubbing away for weeks,” you might say. Well, honey, lay off the grains for a while or you might be doing your complexion more harm than good (You use a scrub every day? You’ve got to be kidding.) There’s



another way to shed off those unwanted skin cells—an ingenious process called chemical exfoliation. Forget abrasive substances on your precious face. This possible solution usually requires nothing more than a cushy cream rich in substances that encourage invisible peeling. Find one with alpha-hydroxy acid or salicylic acid—these are relatively milder than other exfoliants, and deliver results. One local product I like (very affordable, too): Godiva Fruit Acid Revitalizing Complex. Not only will it take care of your hard-headed (pun intended) problem, it will smoothen the rest of your complexion as well.

My lashes are practically nonexistent! They are actually pretty long, but are very, very thin. I’ve tried mascaras that promise to plump them up, but they usually clump up, and even give me dark smudges because my skinny lashes can’t take the weight. What formulas should I look for?

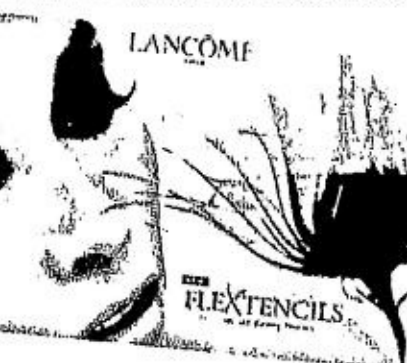
A big fan of lush, ‘60s Hollywood lashes, I can tell. While your

genes dictate that your eyelashes make like Gisele Bündchen on a diet, modern mascara technology just might be able to help you. Some trivia that will make you feel better: Most of the popular beauty houses set aside (millions of) money and expertise just for mascara research, like high-end brand Lancôme that has come out with best-selling formulas for every condition under the sun. You’ll surely love Flexencils from Lancôme. It will

curl your long lashes (to avoid the “drooping” effect especially for those with long lashes) and coat them in a lightweight formula that will trans-

form your eye fringe from anorexic to pleasantly plump. This mascara doesn’t usually require an eyelash curler, but if you must have the flirtest wink, a few seconds with a curler won’t hurt. Another lash-fatening tip: Don’t dust off excess eyeshadow that falls on your lashes when doing your makeup, then apply mascara for an illusion of chubbier lashes.

I have the unruliest head of



hair in the world. It’s wavy, long and thick (which isn’t really good) on good days, and frizzy and tangled on bad days (which is most of the time). I’ve tried relaxing but I think it damaged my hair because the ends seemed to dry up immediately following the procedure. I’m considering rebonding, but am frankly worried because of the relaxing incident. Is rebonding safe?

I’ll be honest with you. Any chemical process you have done on your hair will generate an amount of damage, whether you like it or not. The best procedures and products are those that protect hair before, during and after the procedure—thus bringing damage level to a minimum. Rebonding has been such a hit among Filipinas, but had its own drawbacks. One, it proved to be very costly, usually amounting to what you’d spend on three pairs of shoes; Two, the process took anywhere from a couple of hours to an entire day having your butt planted on a salon

seat—too much especially these days when time is a luxury; Three, not everyone can have it done—there are no available formulas for previously chemically treated hair, and rebonding highly sensitized hair is a complete no-no unless you want Jell-O in place of hair.

You do have another option (thank heavens for technology). Introducing X-tenso from L’Oreal Professionnel, a service for hair that’s “straight without the break.” With formulas for every hair type (natural hair, natural and resistant hair, sensitized hair), it is salvation for those who have colored or permed their hair a tad more than necessary. It is also more flexible in terms of delivering a more “customized” result. You don’t need to have pin-straight hair if you don’t want to (you can skip the ironing part for this), and can simply tame your waves and still maintain body. The best part? You need not bring sleepover gear if you are having this process done—it takes about an hour to two hours depending on hair length. The cost? Let’s just say you can still go on a shopping spree after (this also depends on hair length, though).

Don’t forget maintenance. Keep your hair sleek and silky with moisturizing, smoothing products. Go all out L’Oreal and invest in their Liss Extreme Care and Styling line—I love the leave-on conditioning treatment.

9,000 miles is close enough

By Jayvi Aruta
2bUI Correspondent

THERE was a time not too long ago when owning a computer meant you were rich, and knowing how to use it made you a geek. It also seemed that the amount of time you spent with a keyboard (no mouse yet) was a reflection of how few friends you had. My, my... how times have changed.

Going online these days is pretty much a social activity. I, for one, can’t seem to run out of friends! A pal from the US e-mails me and wants me to give him my life savings to make \$2 million in three months. A girl I apparently went to high school with at my exclusively male alma mater wants to help me drop 100 pounds in 10 weeks. Nubile Swedish girls are sending pictures and detailing the infinite possibilities of our first date. I ignore most of them.

But seriously, real friends are hard to come by.

Not the “sure-we’ll-let-you-hang-out-with-us” kind of friends. I’m talking about people who know you just a little less than you know yourself, and don’t mind at all. People who will listen to what you say and keep most of your embarrassing secrets. There’s not a whole lot of people like those that you can find in this world. And the chances of it happening grow slimmer as you get older.

Let me cut you off before you think this is about long-distance romantic relationships. The book has pretty much been written on that. Besides, having me write about that would be like getting Michael Jordan to play baseball.

Different league

In my humble opinion, friendship is a totally different league. Think about it. Who’s actually closer—your special someone, or the people you complain to about your special someone? The person with whom you have to do an expensive, ritualistic song and dance to finally take home, or the people who can walk freely into your home like they own the place?

A little background information: I grew up with a tight group of people. I don’t have enough joints in my fingers to make a fitting “we’re tight like thiiiis” sign. Some of my buddies and I go way, way back as far as Grade 1. If that’s not enough time to get to know someone, I don’t know what is.

There’s been a fair share of disagreement and drifting, but it’s the same bunch of people that always comes back together. I don’t know about the others, but I never recall referring to our group as a “barkada.” The word seemed too shallow and pretentious for my taste.

Without a doubt, as plans were made for my family to immigrate to Canada, I dismissed them without a second thought. As

As I write this with my best friend’s face staring at me from the monitor, I realize how little I have to fear of distance

luck would have it, I ended up at Queen’s University in Kingston, Ontario, for Fall term 2001. Far from family, far from friends, far from the busy city life I knew. I had gone ahead of my family, and I was all alone in a city full of strangers.

Having been shuttled halfway around the world, a slight friend problem was obvious. Making new friends wasn’t hard. Living in a dorm with 20 people to a floor saw to that. It was keeping the old ones that worried me no end.

My parents reassured me that my friends from high school would always be my friends. Like a steak in the freezer. Cold

comfort, coming from people who had never been more than shouting distance from a familiar face.

Still in touch

What would my life be like if I lost the friends who were good enough to be my siblings?

As dramatic as I’ve tried to make it sound, my Philippine exodus was not such an ordeal. Coming home every day here is just like it was back in Manila. There are usually messages in the inbox, a blinking ICQ bar and a few pop-up messages waiting. I can wave

hello on a webcam and talk without paying for long distance on Yahoo Messenger.

I’m still on the mailing lists of groups I used to be part of. Still in touch. The Internet is the only reason I did not have to be dragged away kicking and screaming.

It feels different being miles away, far from the old whirlwind gimmicks, passing on text messages, decimating tables piled high with food.

I miss not being there. Perhaps without all the connections that exist to keep us together, I would have drifted and faded away. Moved on. Forgotten and been forgotten. If this were written 10 years ago, perhaps you would be reading a more somber and regretful sob story. Not today.

As I write this article with my best friend’s ugly face staring at me from the corner of my screen, I realize how little I have to fear of distance. I like my friends and I’ll keep them because I can, thank you very much.

Luckily for me, technology has made the world small enough to fit on my desk. My life is different in Canada, but it has never really had to change. There’s no way you’re unplugging me. No way in hell.

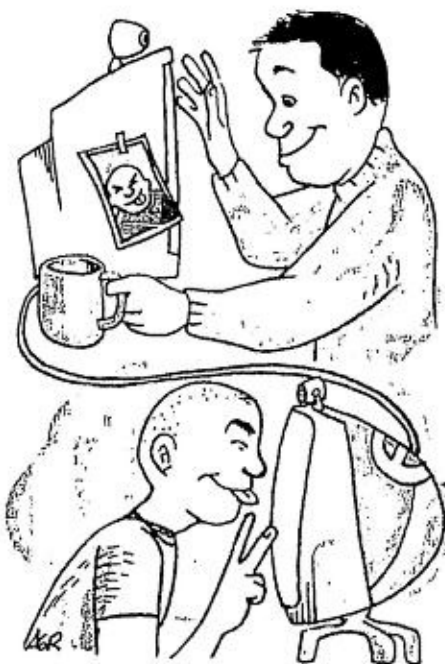


ILLUSTRATION: ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

The real deal on . . .



BRANCH. All grown up

From page D1

human. Everyone makes mistakes and has great triumphs. And not to sweat the small stuff.

There are so many other teenage girls following in your footsteps and doing guitar-driven rock. Who among them do you think will make it?

Avril Lavigne. I think if she’s willing to take risks, she will have as much success on her next record as she had with her first one.

Which is your favorite guitar and why?

1969 Gibson Humming Bird. ‘Cause it’s the sh-t.

Has anyone who ignored you before tried to contact you ever since you became famous?

Not that I know of, but then again I changed my phone number.

The second album seems grittier. What was it like recording it, now that you’ve learned from making the first album?

The whole process was a lot easier because I had more confidence and more creative freedom.

What were the best and worst rumors you’ve heard about yourself?

Best is that I am dating Enrique Iglesias. Worst is that I am pregnant.

Describe what the first song you ever wrote was like.

Simple, repetitive.

Describe the concept behind the music video for “Are You Happy Now.”

Shows my emotional state when I was writing the song. The tarot card represents trying to see what the future holds.

And how was it like working for Dave Navarro?

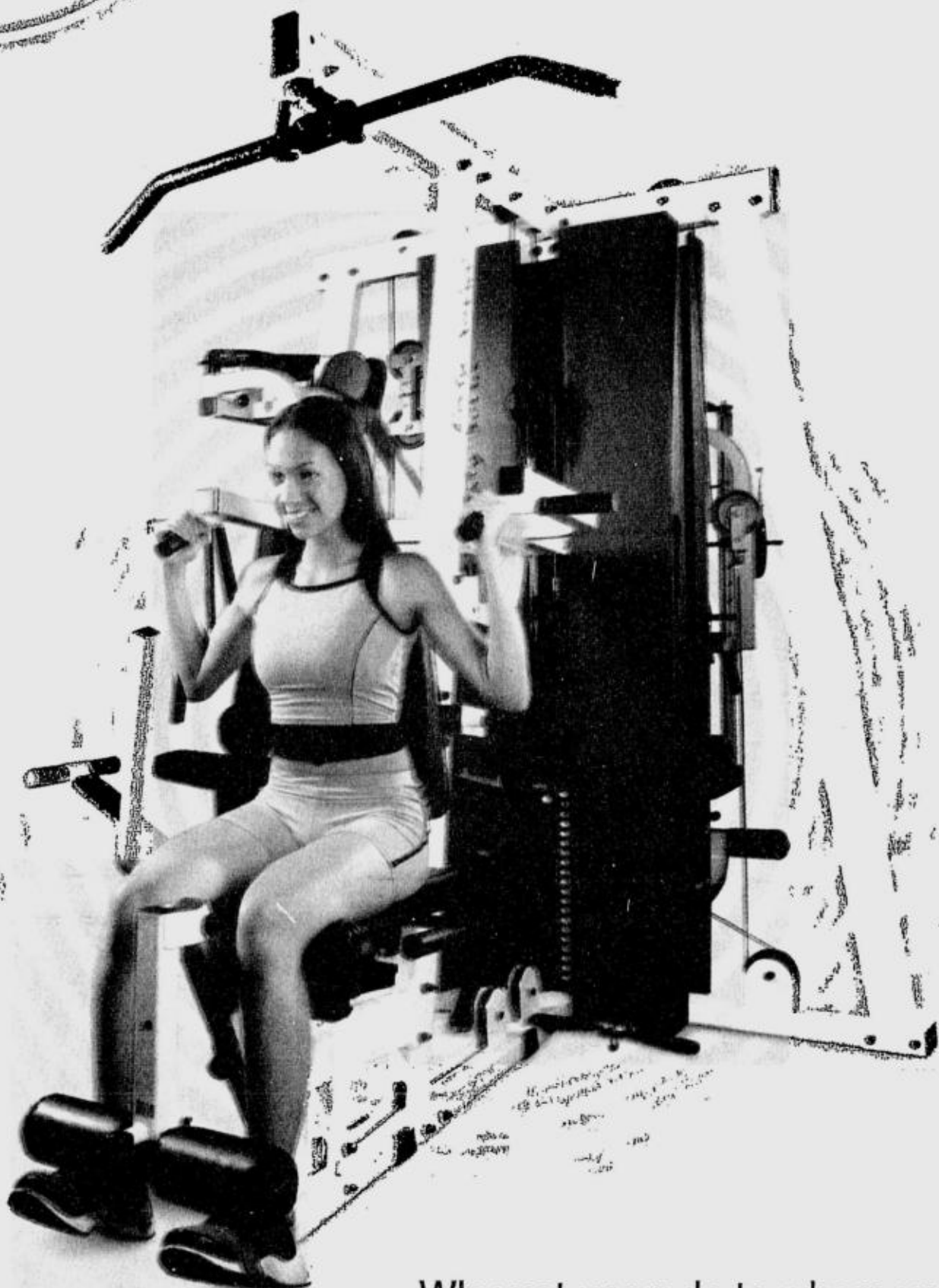
Fast and painless.

You’re invited to do a duet. John Mayer or Chris Carraba (of Dashboard Confessional)?

Who is Chris Carraba? But I would want to do one with Jason Mraz.



Sometimes you need to vary your routine.



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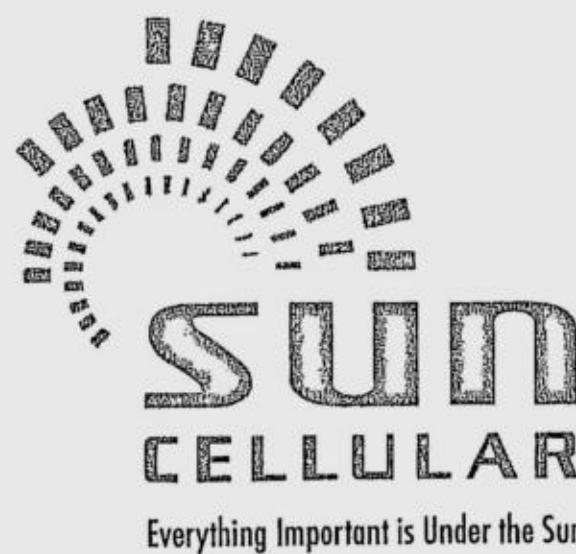
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League of Corporate Foundations

4th Corporate Social Responsibility Week
July 9 to 11, 2003 CSR EXPO, PICC



A celebration of partnership

By Art Cariaga

LCF and Tri-sectoral Group invites public to PICC event

CORPORATE Social Responsibility has become gospel among many Filipino executives. They have accepted it in their minds and embraced it in their hearts.

As a result, most of the successful companies in the country today consider CSR integral to their strategy, intrinsic to their values, and indispensable to the way they do business.

CSR EXPO 2003, while more ambitious than CSR week celebrations in the past, is a modest showcase of what the enlightened business sector has already been doing for many years—reaching out and working with poor communities—hand in hand with line agencies and non-government organizations.

The relatively new concept that this CSR EXPO is trying to promote is the League of Corporate Foundation's two-pronged advocacy in CSR as explained by LCF chair Vicky Garchitorena, "While we ask business to be responsible for their communities, we are also encouraging our communities to learn the discipline and logic of business."

"When we put responsibility and discipline—caring and carefulness—together we can really have sustainable programs that keep businesses viable and communities livable," said Vicky Garchitorena, president of Ayala Foundation Inc.

"This kind of perspective will allow us to appreciate the urgency of putting an end to poverty. When we see the evil effects of poverty, we must understand that they afflict not some of us, but all of us," she said.

In the fight against poverty, we have learned one valuable lesson. We must now invent and propagate a new vocabulary of social development that revolves around the idea of partnership," she added.

Corporate Social Responsibility—putting a heart to business and putting business in the heart of communities—can

make us believe in ourselves again. We can renew ourselves, and re-create a country that our children deserve," she said.

The chair of the CSR EXPO Steering Committee, Marilou Erni, executive director of Petron Foundation, pointed out the significance of this event at the PICC. She said, "This CSR EXPO 2003 is quite a departure from the previous years' celebrations. If this is a defining moment for LCF, it is only because we are advancing the idea that only a tri-sectoral cooperation... among the business sector, government and NGO's and people organizations... can really make a difference in addressing the problem of poverty.

"Partnership—or the idea of inclusion, rather than exclusion—is the driving force of our CSR EXPO 2003. This is why we chose an open venue, a place familiar and more accessible to all, a bigger place where we could welcome more people."

"Aside from the spacious venue, we have also tried hard to get the experts in various fields, education... which is the focus of day one, ... then in environment, health and wellness, arts and culture... which are for day two... and in livelihood or enterprise development... on day three.

"We have engaged these eminent experts for three full days of plenaries, forums, and roundtable discussions so that as many people as possible would hear them. We hope that these encounters would result in actual productive activities that will benefit more people in the future.

"In all three days, we have the knowledge camp for kids, wellness camp for everyone who need to see how fit he or she is, smoke emission testing, and other on-site activities. We hope that these exhibits and learning sessions will create a favorable culture for helping each other. For it is in partnership with communi-



ONE of our beneficiaries

ties that we find growth and fulfillment. It is in partnership that we understand that all of us are connected to one another... as individuals, as families, as communities and as a nation."

"Civil society must finally recognize that business has something to offer and that it can put food on the table, educate the children, and provide a roof over their heads, and finally that government cannot do the job alone," said Lydia Sarmiento-Enrile of Sarmiento Foundation Inc.

Basta Pinoy Ka...Ka Partner Ka...sa Edukasyon!

To further illustrate this year's theme several foundations from the private sector chose to partner with government agencies and/or other foundations to uplift the various marginalized sectors in the Philippines:

The Education Committee recently took part in Project Tulungan with 19 member foundations where they gather their resources to provide the educational needs of Silangan Elementary School in Taguig.

Another popular project of the committee is the Connected.ph which contributed complete packages of computer laboratories with Internet connectivity and teacher computer training to public high schools.

While the Knowledge Channel Foundation is taking advantage of the power of television, educational shows like "Math-Tinik" and "Sine'skwela", which is produced by ABS-CBN Foundation, proves to be an effective tool in

teaching. Rina Lopez-Bautista of KCF, who chairs the Education Committee of LCF, is into the calling of local communities. She is assisted by co-chair Tina Lagbao of Coca-Cola Foundation.

Insular Life's Adopt-a-Scholar Program donates school supplies and uniforms to less fortunate students in public schools until he or she graduates from elementary.

Scholarship grants, professional chairs and school buildings are the focus of the AY Foundation of the Yuchengco Group.

Aside from scholarships for both students and teachers, the SGV Foundation also committed its resources to computerization of schools, funding faculty development, and book assistance.

The Bato Balani Foundation, on the other hand, recently launched its Sulong Edukasyon program in response to the President's Educational Support Program.

To further strengthen Filipino ingenuity among students, the Bank of the Philippine Islands Foundation initiated the BPI Science Awards that recognizes students in the field of science.

Also, BPI Foundation, through the BPI College Scholarship Program, extends educational assistance to dependents of BPI employees with excellent scholastic performance and leadership qualities who wish to pursue science and engineering courses. In previous years, BPI Foundation established Scholarship Funds to

CELEBRATION/E4

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Doing good and doing well seminar series

By Nyla Prieto

CORPORATE social responsibility (CSR) is "doing good and doing it well". Thus, the League of Corporate Foundations (LCF) successfully conducted a series of training workshops organized by Dr. Kenneth Hartigan-Go of Zuellig Foundation. The seminar-series were aimed at promoting CSR as a business practice.

Doing good and doing it well

The League started the series with a seminar on "How to Establish/ Manage an Effective Corporate Foundation" held Feb. 28 at Petron MegaPlaza. Participants to this workshop gained considerable insights on the benefits of adopting corporate social responsibility to both the mother corporation and the community where it operates.

Distinguished CSR practitioners were invited to speak during the seminar. LCF chair

Vicky Garchitorena (Ayala Foundation) talked on how companies can undertake CSR programs; lawyer Louie Pangilinan of Fort Bonifacio Foundation spoke on the legal processes of setting up corporate foundations; Bobby Calingo of Mirant Foundation on ensuring financial sustainability; Nicole Tirona of Andres Soriano Foundation shared with participants project proposals writing and Art Cariaga, LCF executive director, gave a talk on benchmarks for good CSR. Pely Soledad, executive director of the Philippine Council for NGO Certification, was also invited to talk on the process of certification for NGOs. Bato-Balani Foundation chair Saturnino Belen gave an inspirational talk on how Bato-Balani started and their foundation's commitment to improve quality education.

Doing good and telling it well

For most NGOs, common concern is how their "good news" can be told through media. Very apt and timely, indeed, for the "Media Training for NGOs" held April 8 at the Eugenio Lopez Jr. Communications Centre was very well attended with even some participants coming from the provinces. Well-known media personalities from print and broadcast shared with participants practical tips on how good news can get into media. But since information is a free market, the speakers advised NGOs to explore creative ways on how their stories can be communicated. NGOs should also keep in mind the important elements of news—it should be timely, relevant and accurate. Both the NGOs and the media also learned the value of establishing a good working relationship.

Doing good and keeping people well

Quality healthcare programs are fast becoming the trend among social development organizations. From simple medical/dental and outreach missions, healthcare projects have evolved into long-term programs in response to the needs of indigent communities lacking this basic social service. LCF's third seminar this year focused on "Setting Up An Effective Community Health Care Program" held May 23 at Petron MegaPlaza.

The seminar tackled the sustainability of health care programs and what better alternatives there are to medical missions. Healthcare professionals were invited to share their experiences and tips on how foundations can improve health programs and more importantly, be effective in serving the poor.

Quality healthcare programs are fast becoming the trend among social development organizations

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Promoting excellence in education

EDUCATION plays a vital role in ensuring that a nation achieves economic, political and social stability. While the government invests in education to strengthen the country's human resources, financial constraints prevent people from having full access to quality education, which has become a privilege rather than a right for the majority.

It is in this context that the Metrobank Foundation, the philanthropic arm of the Metrobank Group, found its niche in the field of social development. Through the foundation's interventions in education, it has helped the government's poverty alleviation efforts by increasing access to quality education as well as by putting a premium on excellence to enable Filipinos to survive in a globally competitive environment.

Search for Outstanding Teachers

Since 1985, the Search for Outstanding Teachers (SOT) has honored 214 of the best and brightest members of the teaching profession from all over the country.

Aside from the monetary incentive and accolades they receive, other opportunities for professional growth are opened for SOT awardees. These include being invited to conduct lectures, training and workshops for both teachers and students, participating in other local and international professional competitions, study tours and educational

fellowships. The awardees also receive extensive media exposure and are automatically accepted as members of the Network of Outstanding Teachers and Educators or Noted, an honor society of Metrobank Foundation Outstanding Teachers.

Metrobank-MTAP-DepEd Math Challenge

Over the years, young Filipino students have manifested poor mathematical skills, which was evident in the Third International Math and Science study or TIMSS conducted in 1995 and 1999, where the Philippines ranked low in math and science compared to other countries.

In its pursuit to promote excellence in education, Metrobank Foundation has embarked on the improvement of math education in the country, which it hopes will eventually redound to the enhancement of mathematical abilities among the Filipino youth. In 1998, the Metrobank Foundation partnered with the Mathematics Teachers Association of the Philippines or MTAP and the then Department of Education, Culture and Sports in the National Capital Region (DECS-NCR) to conduct an annual math competition for elementary and high schools students from public and private schools.

Metrobank-MTAP-DepEd Math Challenge or MMC competition aims to encourage greater inter-

est in math and provide an opportunity for students to further hone their mathematical skills. In 2001, the Math Challenge was expanded to include all 16 regions of the country, thereby effectively widening the impact of the competition.

More than 250,000 students joined this year's competition, affirming the following that the Math Challenge has gained over the years.

Scholarship Programs

The Foundation has awarded more than 500 scholarship grants to poor and deserving students from all over the country under its various educational assistance programs in partnership with the country's best educational institutions. Since its inception in 1996, the Foundation's scholarship programs have evolved to address specific target groups.

The main scholarship program is the Assistance for the Completion of College Education for Superior Students or Access is a four-year program designed for students taking up Business, Engineering and Science.

Through the Excellence in Teaching Program or ETP, the Foundation hopes to encourage education majors from 5th and 6th class municipalities studying in selected Centers of Excellence for Teacher Education schools become effective mentors in the future.

In 1999, the Foundation established the Grants in

Aid of College Education or GRACE to further assist students directly and indirectly affected by the then burgeoning economic crisis. A one-year grant for senior students enrolled in selected Business and Engineering courses.

In 2001, Metrobank Foundation likewise heeded President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's call for private sector participation for the government's poverty alleviation programs by providing educational assistance for dependents of indigent families at the Polytechnic University of the Philippines and Technological University of the Philippines under the PGMA Scholarship Program.

Beyond the financial assistance, the Foundation also regularly conducts training programs for its scholars not only to help them cope with the hardships of academic life but likewise to become well-rounded individuals who will later take on greater responsibilities in our society. Such examples of training programs are Project PUSH or Program for Upgrading Scholars' Headway that provides fundamental remedial skills to PGMA scholars, the Advanced Specialized Program for Excellence in Teaching Program or Aspet for graduating ETP scholars and the annual Graduates' Forum for Access, ETP and GRACE scholars.

METROBANK FOUNDATION College Scholarship Program Members of Class 2003

Assistance for the Completion of College Education for Superior Students (ACCESS)

Abaño, Andres C. (SU) - Cum Laude
Abrea, Raymond A. (SBC)
Alcayaga, Anna Marie T. (USA) - Cum Laude
Bacarez, Michael H. (SBC) - Academic Distinction
Balliza, Bernadette E. (CEU) - Magna cum Laude
Bernardo, Jonafar A. (MDC)
Caibiran, Arthur I. (UST) - Cum Laude
Canata, Alexander F. (USA) - Academic Distinction
Cordova, Jessica P. (AdDU) - Cum Laude
Corpus, Christopher D. (AdZU) - Honorable Mention
Custodio, Mabel C. (DLSU) - Cum Laude
Dizon, Castille C. (USJ-R)
Enano, Nelson H. Jr. (AdDU) - Cum Laude
Jacinto, Christian Niño M. (AdMU) - Honorable Mention
Javier, Abigail B. (SU) - Cum Laude
Lava, Fiona Marie L. (CEU)
Madarang, Rachelle A. (MDC)
Paras, Richard M. (MDC)
Rado, Mac Michael L. (XU)
Ramos, Mark Louie F. (UST) - Cum Laude
Repol, Judy Alice U. (AdMU) - Cum Laude
Rivera, Reovelyn N. (SLU)
Sarausad, Michael A. (USJ-R) - Cum Laude
Suico, Lourdes I. (NDU)
Tan, Anne-Marie S. (AdZU) - Honorable Mention
Tan, Genesis G. (UST) - Cum Laude
Venzon, Ryan M. (UST) - Cum Laude
Villaflor, Decee Joy O. (AdDU) - Cum Laude

Excellence in Teaching Program (ETP)

Alfaro, Maricris T. (WMSU)
Caguio, Joan B. (NDMU)
Canete, Gilda P. (LNU) - Cum Laude
Delante, Nimrod L. (LNU) - Magna cum Laude
Glorio, Danebeth T. (WVSU) - Magna cum Laude
Gumpeng, Jocelyn T. (SLU) - Cum Laude
Manual, Marilyn P. (WVSU) - Cum Laude
Marquez, Mayeth C. (PNU) - Cum Laude
Mottilla, Myla A. (PNU)
Noces, June D. (PNU) - Cum Laude
Pariñas, Alona F. (SPU) - Cum Laude
Pascolan, Florabel C. (SPU)
Rocha, Filma S. (LNU) - Cum Laude
Sta. Romana, Laarni S. (PNU) - Cum Laude
Subaldo, Mark Angelo A. (NDMU)
Sulpico, Maritess R. (NDMU) - Cum Laude
Tejada, Angelo D. (WVSU)
Walsi-en, Norie B. (SLU) - Cum Laude
Yap, Roger D. (WMSU) - Cum Laude

Grants in Aid of College Education (GRACE)

Alcodia, Edgison G. (HAU)
Batlin II, Mariano S. (SLU)
Benosa, Grace S. (CEU-Malolos)
Capulong, May M. (CEU-Malolos)
Dangatan, Mark Anthony R. (UB)
Dela Rosa, Mary Ann G. (HAU)
Estinopo, Rudyman S. (AdNU)
Estrella, Shaylyn C. (CEU-Malolos)
Flores, Marvin C. (MSEUF) - Cum Laude
Gabiana, Valerie Kristina F. (NDU)
Gemparo, Annaliza Y. (USJ-R) - Cum Laude
Gerna, Ranelle S. (UE)
Lagasca, Joel R. (UB)
Manansala, Princess B. (SLU)
Merle, Regina V. (MSEUF)
Oliva, Racquel A. (AdNU)
Omerez, Agnes P. (USJ-R) - Cum Laude
Parada, Juliet A. (UE)
Samson, Mary Esther S. (CPU) - Cum Laude
Tay, Alexander S. Jr. (CPU)

List of Partner Schools

ACCESS

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Ateneo de Manila University (AdMU), Quezon City
Ateneo de Zamboanga University (AdZU), Zamboanga City
Centro Escolar University (CEU), Manila
De La Salle University (DLSU), Manila
Far Eastern University (FEU), Manila
Manila Doctors College (MDC), Manila
Notre Dame University (NDU), Cotabato City
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Silliman University (SU), Dumaguete City
St. Louis University (SLU), Baguio City
University of San Agustin (USA), Iloilo City
University of San Carlos (USC), Cebu City
University of San Jose-Recoletos (USJ-R), Cebu City
University of Santo Tomas (UST), Manila
University of the East (UE), Manila
Xavier University (XU), Cagayan de Oro City

ETP

Leyte Normal University (LNU), Tacloban City
Notre Dame of Marbel University (NDMU), South Cotabato
Philippine Normal University (PNU), Manila
St. Louis University (SLU), Baguio City
St. Paul University (SPU), Tuguegarao City
West Visayas State University (WVSU), Iloilo City
Western Mindanao State University (WMSU), Zamboanga City

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Central Philippine University (CPU), Iloilo City
Centro Escolar University (CEU), Malolos, Bulacan
Holy Angel University (HAU), Angeles City
Manuel S. Enverga University Foundation (MSEUF), Lucena City
Mapua Institute of Technology (MIT), Manila
University of Baguio (UB), Baguio City

Celebrating Excellence

Transforming the pursuit of excellence into a tool for nation building

Since 1995, the Metrobank Foundation has helped empower the Filipino youth by providing access to quality higher education. Through our various scholarship programs, more than 500 poor and deserving students have been given the opportunity to obtain a college diploma, by far the best ticket out of poverty for majority of our people.

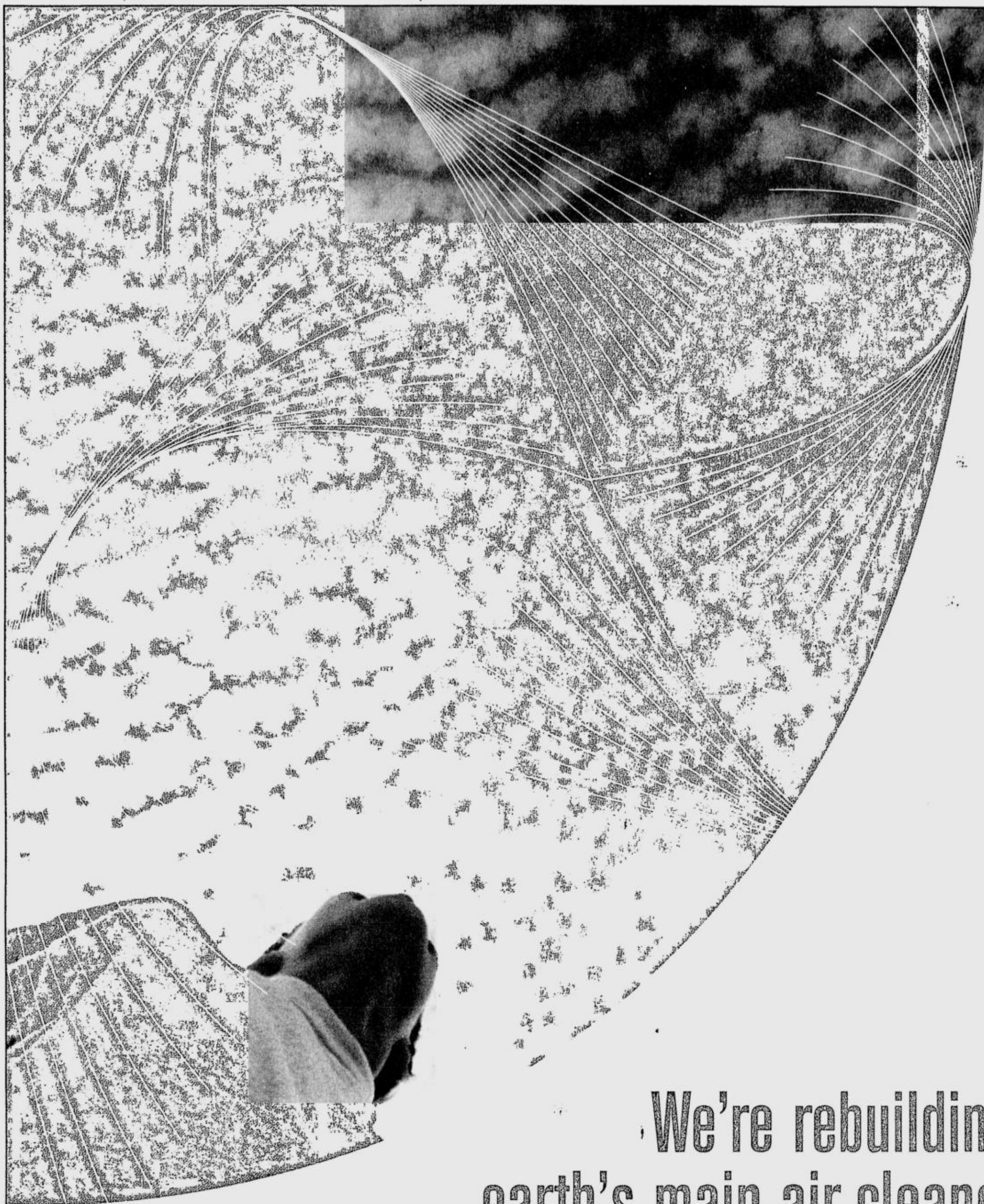
As part of our social investments in the country's future, our scholars have proven time and again that they are equal to the task of fulfilling the Foundation's commitment to promote a culture of excellence among our people. This

year, 30 of our 67 graduates finished their courses with Latin honors, with many more graduating with various distinctions and awards.

Even as we honor them for valiantly inching toward their dream of a better life for themselves and their families, we also recognize our scholars' achievements inside and outside the classroom. Indeed, while we share in the glory of this important milestone in their lives, we celebrate the pursuit of excellence as well. As we have harnessed its power to transform lives, so do we hope that through these graduates, it can help bring about a better future for all of us.



After exhorting them to exercise responsible citizenship and give something back to society, Dr. Ty poses for posterity with scholars of class 2003 and receives a token of appreciation from Genesis Tan, one of the cum Laude graduates from UST. Mrs. Mary Vy Ty and other senior officers of the Foundation also meet with the scholars and pose for the traditional group picture. This year's crop of scholars who graduated with Latin honors are shown in center photo.



We're rebuilding earth's main air cleaner

The Mangrove Ecosystem or what scientists call "carbon sink" is one of earth's most efficient air filters. It absorbs and converts harmful carbon dioxide (CO₂) into breathable, pure oxygen. In Quezon Province this ecosystem has been destroyed by decades of wood gathering, land reclamation, and clearing for prawn and fish farming. But with the completion of Mirant's Carbon Sink Initiative, millions of people will soon breathe cleaner and fresher air. Aaaahhhhhh!



MIRANT

Beyond Today, Beyond Energy



A comprehensive environmental and economic initiative of Mirant Philippines. It aims to protect watersheds and their abundant marine life; educate the people on the importance of these natural treasures; and assist in improving people's lives by providing, and promoting, more sustainable sources of income.

This undertaking has three components: restoration of 150 hectares of mangrove forest in Pagbilao (classified as the world's second most diverse mangrove ecosystem); rehabilitation of 150 hectares of upland forest; and establishment of a 145-hectare Mangrove Eco-Destination Site. This site could serve as the country's future 'mangrove seedling bank' with its 48 mangrove species and a major eco-destination center for research and education.

Carbon Sink Initiative. It's a new standard for environmental stewardship. And a continuing genuine partnership with government and communities.



A celebration of partnership

From page E1

support economically disadvantaged but deserving students in science and engineering in partner-universities as well as Professorial Chairs to promote faculty development.

Intel Philippines' CSR projects concerns its large-scale education program. Falling under a global education initiative dubbed Intel Innovation in Education initiatives, the projects under this program include the annual Intel Philippines Science Fair—an annual nationwide gathering of math and science enthusiasts in a one-week celebration of excellence.

The Intel Philippine Science Fair allows students to field in their investigatory or science research projects to vie for a chance to represent the Philippines in the prestigious Intel International Science and Engineering Fair (Intel ISEF). The Intel ISEF is considered the "Olympics of Science Fairs."

A total of 101 students have completed courses in science and technology, engineer-

ing, computer science and agriculture through San Miguel's Community Scholarship Programs. As part of the scholars' personal development seminar-workshops and summer camps like Ako'y Batang Pinoy. . . Pag-asang Bayan were conducted to hone their leadership and organizing skills.

Meralco Foundation Inc. (MFI) is one of the many foundations that devotes its effort in giving the youth proper education. The Out-of-School Youth (OSY) Project is a three-month intensive program comprising an in-center and on-the-job training. It also strengthens the partnership of MFI through Edtech and Consuelo Foundation Inc. with the financial assistance from the World Bank, International Youth Foundation, and Lucent Technologies.

The Aboitiz Group Foundation Inc. also embarks in enriching the area of education from the supply of hardware and software. It

continuously contributes to the infrastructure needs as well as assist in enhancing the talents of educators. The foundation has approved for the construction of 70 classrooms in areas where the Aboitiz companies operate, which are located in Cebu, Davao, Iligan, Benguet and other parts of the Visayas and Mindanao. It has likewise built libraries, donated books—from children's books to Encyclopedia Britannica volumes.

Saving Mother Earth Through Teamwork

The environment also gets a boost from foundations which engage in partnering with those bent on saving Mother Earth.

The Environment Committee works in accordance with the 9 principles of the United Nations Global Compact. The committee is working hand-in-hand with the provincial government of Ifugao to save the Philippine

pride, the Ifugao Rice Terraces. This Eighth Wonder of the World is considered by Unesco to be the only project of the ancient world that is environment-enhancing.

Most members of the Envicom like its chair, Mon Ventura of Toyota Foundation, is into tree-planting and smoke emission testing in partnership with Bantay Kalikasan. For its part, Envicom vice-chair Nicole Tirona of Andres Soriano Foundation is into improving the quality of life in small island communities while preserving natural resources through sustainable resource management.

BPI Foundation is deeply involved in the protection of the environment. It supports an employee-led project in Cagayan de Oro. BPI Save Mother Earth Club (BPI-SMEC) project trains students in 12 partner public elementary and high schools in solid waste manage-

CELEBRATION/E5

The environment also gets a boost from foundations which engage in partnering with those bent on saving Mother Earth

SPLASH FOUNDATION INC.

The dream to make Filipinos self-reliant

IN VALENZUELA City, 2,000 unemployed women now have jobs because of a livelihood training. Pediatric patients at the East Avenue Medical Center are given assistance. Youths are given scholarships.

Splash Foundation Inc. (SFI), the social arm of Splash Corp., is doing all these since its establishment in August 1997.

The SFI aims to help Filipinos, particularly those who are deprived, by giving them community, livelihood and social development programs.

Through the Linis Ganda, Mula Ulo Hanggang Paa, a livelihood training on basic cosmetology, the women went through a six-day course learning the basics in haircutting, hair coloring, hair winding, manicure, pedicure and foot spa.

After the course, the participants are given a certificate and a starter kit as an incentive that they can use for their home service. And everything is for free!

However, the livelihood program

doesn't just stop at giving training. There's also the program Kumusta Na?—where the graduates are monitored for their performance.

A survey has revealed that about 80 percent of the graduates are now doing home service. Some are now employed in big salons and have gone abroad and are now working as beauticians.

Supporting the National Anti-Poverty Commission's Kabalikatan Laban sa Kahirapan program, SFI has been conducting the livelihood training to the Kalahi communities.

SFI has been assisting pediatric patients confined at East Avenue Medical Center (EAMC).

SFI provides medicines and other medical needs of the patient from the time of referral until recommended for discharge.

"We do not only provide the medicines but we also visit the patient and monitor the development," says Maurice P. Ligot, executive director. "This way, we're sure that the pa-

tient is well and may now go back to the family.

EAMC was also a recipient of two life-saving equipment, the Pediatric Pulse Oximeter and Electrocardiogram machine.

SFI has also renovated the Pediatric Treatment Room from the gray drab room to a well-ventilated, lighted room equipped with new beds.

Aside from the livelihood, SFI has scholars enrolled in different universities and colleges.

"It is my dream to see every Filipino to be equipped with skills and to become self-reliant, thus becoming an asset to the society," says Dr. Rosalinda Ang-Hortaleza, SFI president and chair.

Fulfilling this dream, Splash Foundation has built a new facility, the Splash Foundation Inc. Social Development Center in Canumay, Valenzuela City. It houses activities such as livelihood training, medical missions and scholars' base and other community development programs.

Mirant in CSR Expo

MIRANT Philippines is partnering with the League of Corporate Foundations and the Trisectoral Group on Poverty Reduction in this year's celebration of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) week.

The event consists of a three-day CSR expo from July 9 to 11 at the Philippine Trade and Training Center. Dubbed "Ka Partner Ka" it is expected to be the biggest and most relevant gathering of private companies, government agencies, and civil society groups in the country as they come together to partner in the task of social development.

Mirant, through its CSR arm, Mirant Philippines Foundation, has actively espoused various CSR initiatives, including programs to alleviate poverty and preserve and protect the environment among others.

Its flagship CSR program, Barangay Electrification Assistance for Country-

side Development (Project Beacon) aims to complete the energization of over 1,000 far-flung barangays within the year.

The P-1 billion initiative, being done in coordination with the Department of Energy, National Electrification Administration, various local governments and cooperatives, will benefit an estimated 1.5 million individuals in 33 provinces nationwide by providing access to electricity to far-flung barangays.

The CSR expo showcases initiatives in the areas of educational assistance, environmental care, delivery of basic health and services, arts and culture, livelihood generation and entrepreneurial development. A strategic partner of the event, Mirant will sponsor a fellowship night on the first evening of the three-day event (July 9, Wednesday, 5:30 p.m.) at Hall B of the PTTC.

Mirant, through its CSR arm, Mirant Philippines Foundation, has actively espoused various CSR initiatives, including programs to alleviate poverty and preserve and protect the environment among others

SA MGA KAMAY NG MAMAMAYAN, MAY KAPAKI-PAKINABANG NA KAKAYAHAN

Paunlarin ang kakayahang ito.

Sa tulong ng Livelihood, Community

Service, Health Care, Environmental

at Education programs ng Splash

Foundation, Inc., napapaunlad ang

kabuhayan. Nabibigyang halaga ang

kakayahan. Kahawak-kamay ang

sambayanan tungo sa kaunlaran.



SPLASH
FOUNDATION, INC.

Pagtulong sa Kapwa. Pagsulong ng Bansa.



Member: League of Corporate Foundations

A celebration of partnership

From page E4

Bigay Galing sa Kalikasan ng Bataan environmental program is helping the province of Bataan achieve sustainable development through a dynamic multi-sectoral involvement

ment. It undertook projects as partners of the Japan International Cooperation Agency and continues to work with the Cagayan de Oro Local Environmental Planning Office.

San Miguel Foundation's "Tulong-tulong sa Tullahan" river rehabilitation project is a clean-up drive of the Tullahan River in partnership with the Department of Public Works and Highways, ABS-CBN Foundation's Bantay-Kalikasan and the local governments of Malabon and Valenzuela. The program won the Anvil Award of Excellence in 2002.

San Miguel's Davao Brewery's Adopt-a-River project won the City's DENR Mother Nature Award. Annual tree planting activities are conducted by San Miguel Group's various plant facilities nationwide. San Miguel's Mandaue, Cebu Brewery conducts vermi-compost-

ing of canteen and yards waste. Likewise, composting of food and yard waste is maintained at San Miguel's San Fernando Brewery in partnership with local community leaders.

As water service provider of the East Zone, Manila Water launched the Tubig Para sa Barangay in 1998 to ensure that more and more people can have access to clean and affordable water service. Committed to help build communities, particularly in the city's marginalized informal settlements, the TPSB has successfully provided more than 480,000 underserved communities with water service connections where before there were none. In 2003, Manila Water has already surpassed its year-end target of 100,000 additional people connected to affordable, potable water supply, thereby improving their quality of life.

For its part, Maynilad's Bayan Tubig Project has partnered with ABS-CBN Foundation's Bantay Kinabukasan in providing water to selected waterless areas in Quezon City.

Dubbed Bigkis-Bataan or Bigay Galing sa Kalikasan ng Bataan, this environmental program is helping the province of Bataan achieve sustainable development through a dynamic multi-sectoral involvement. While dedicated to managing the coastal and marine resources of Bataan, the program is also becoming an integral part of efforts to revive the Manila Bay and clean the seas of East Asia.

Bigay Galing sa Kalikasan ng Bataan is helping the province of Bataan achieve sustainable development through a dynamic multi-sectoral involvement. While dedicated to managing the coastal and marine re-

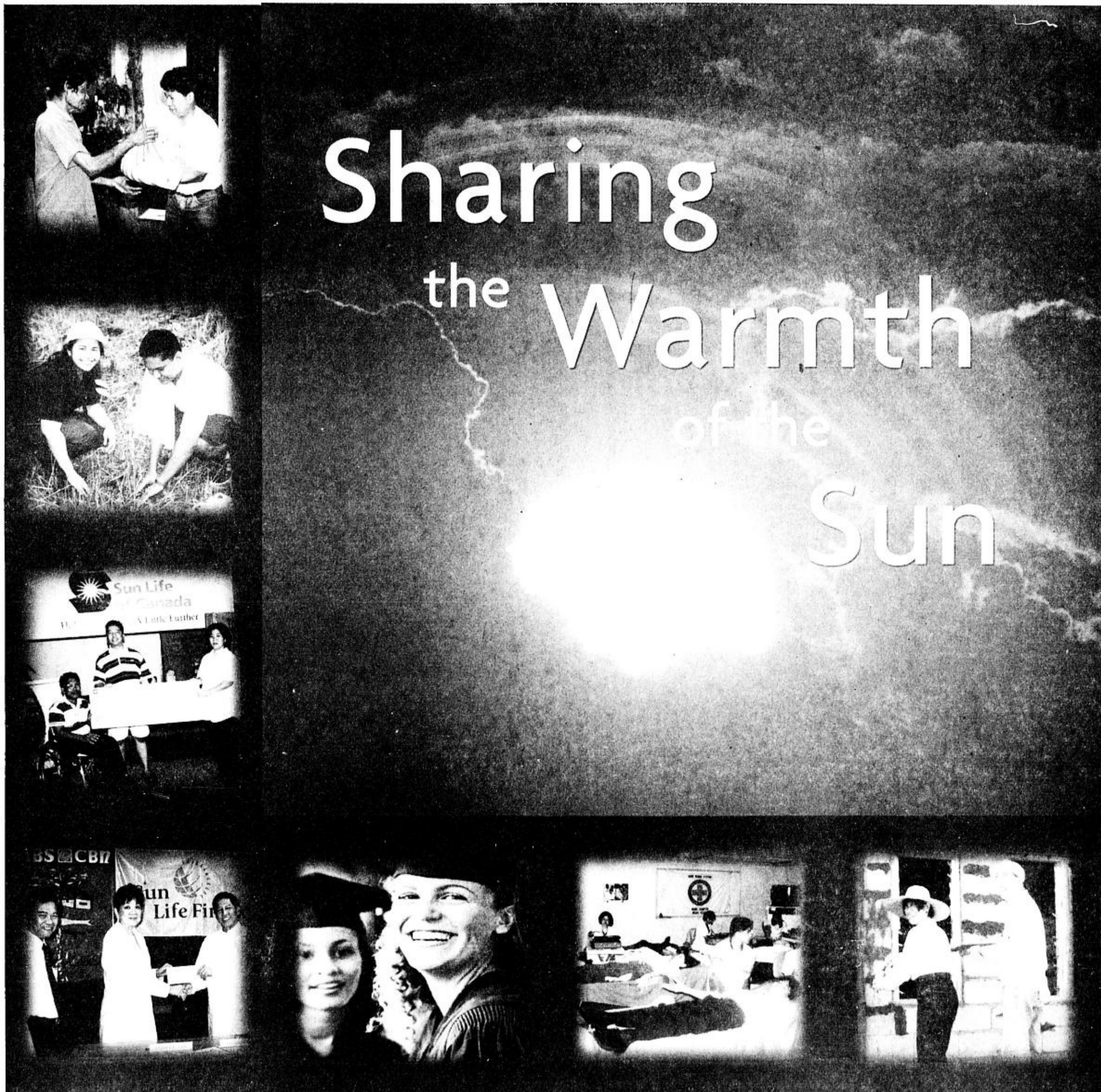
sources of Bataan, the program is also becoming an integral part of efforts to revive the Manila Bay and clean the seas of East Asia.

Keeping People Well

The member foundations of the LCF health committee chaired by Karen Villanueva of Pfizer Foundation Inc., and Maurice Ligot of Splash Foundation as co-chair, is determined to improve the healthcare system in the country. To be able to provide free clinics, social service programs, and child hospitalization to the indigents, they partnered with different public and private hospitals in rural or depressed areas. With the assistance of the Philippine National Red Cross, member foun-

CELEBRATION/E6

Sharing the Warmth of the Sun



OUR CORPORATE GIVING PHILOSOPHY

Sun Life Financial is committed to building partnerships and supporting initiatives that benefit the communities in which we live and work. Guided by our core values, we look for opportunities where the needs of our communities, our business objectives, and our people align. These are the areas of focus where we can create sustainable results, generate the greatest involvement and achieve the most benefit for the causes we support.

In the Philippines and around the world, we take pride in encouraging and promoting the spirit of volunteerism among our people in support of projects designed to provide health care, shelter, education, a sound environment, and cultural upliftment.

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A celebration of partnership

From page E5

dations conduct regular blood donations.

The Doctors to the Barrio program with the Department of Health have set up virtual libraries in major medical institutions. The committee also supported the Leaders for Health project where doctors, local officials and community leaders volunteer their services in improving health conditions of rural folks.

For its valuable community projects and excellent support to the health programs of the local communities, Intel Philippines has obtained numerous accolades, including the 2000 Balikatan Award from the Department of Health and the Best Community Programs Award from the Philippine Export Processing Zone Authority (Peza) from 2000 to 2002. Winning the Best Community Programs three times in a row from Peza elevates Intel Philippines to the Hall of Fame for its outstanding contributions to the community.

Entrepreneurship is Key to Prosperity

The vision of the Enterprise Development Committee through its chair, Lydia Sarmiento-Enrile, and Irma Cosico of ABS-CBN Bayan Foundation as co-chair, is to enhance the capability of its members to draw from the resources of their principals towards assisting partners manage sustainable enterprises to move the country towards a revived economy.

Entrepreneurship committee chair, the Sarmiento Foundation Inc. for its part, is helping small and medium scale entrepreneurs with its capital assistance program. The loan assistance for the micro producers have helped reduced their dependence on usurious credit suppliers.

BPI Foundation continues to provide TSPI (Tulay sa Pag-unlad) Development Inc. with funds for relending for start-up en-

trepreneurs. A total of P60 million in loans had already been granted to 2,000 borrowers since the initial credit line in 1984. The loan program enjoys a 95-percent repayment rate. Consequently, the program serves as model for micro-finance lending in the country.

The Meralco Millennium Foundation has a program for its employees and dependents of the Meralco community by encouraging entrepreneurship within the Meralco property. Aside from livelihood skills training, it also has a cooperative that enables employees to sell the products they produce.

The Roxas Gargollo Foundation Inc. continuously imparts technical assistance through training and skills upgrading. Some of its undertakings are: Sewing Project of women's group of the Kooperatiba ng Magsasaka ni San Isidro Labrador (Komsil) in Banilad and Salted Egg Production of Samahang Bukhay in Pandan. These projects are in partnership with Philippine Australian Community Assistance Programs (Pacap AusAID). While the Bamboo Craft Project of Tumulim Farmers Multi-Purpose Cooperative (TFMPC) is in collaboration with the Department of Labor and Employment under the Poverty Free Zone Program.

Partnering in Arts and Culture

Chaired by Max Ventura of Philam Foundation with Dannie Alvarez of Ayala Foundation as co-chair,

Ultimately, CSR week this year will prove to be a relevant event not only to the corporate foundations but the whole country as well. The activities, from plenary sessions to roundtable discussions, will give the public a peek on what cooperation and partnership can do.

With a report from Marlet Salazar



CSR and partnership at work

'We believe in being catalysts for change. This holds true especially in helping improve the lives of the less privileged, and we look forward to every opportunity to contribute to their well-being. We can do no less. And in partnering with others, we are able to guarantee that in our efforts to make a difference, the possibilities are endless'

Nicasio I. Alcantara
Chairman and CEO
Petron Corporation



TOUCHING LIVES



PROVIDING OPPORTUNITIES



BUILDING DREAMS

Just as BPI is reaching out to its customers through a wide range of innovative banking services, BPI FOUNDATION is equally committed to reaching out to other sectors of society with programs focusing on the areas of education, livelihood, health and value enhancement.

QUALITY EDUCATION

- BPI SCIENCE AWARDS
- SCHOLARSHIPS
- PROFESSORIAL CHAIRS
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- FINANCING ASSISTANCE LINE FOR NGOs AND COOPERATIVES

CORPORATE INVOLVEMENT

- MEDICAL MISSIONS
- SOCIAL HOUSING
- DISASTER RESPONSE PROGRAM
- COMMUNITY RELATIONS PROGRAM
- OTHERS
- VALUE ENHANCEMENT
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.... cultivating for children self-sufficient, secure, and compassionate families

....providing families with socio-economic opportunities that would enable them to live dignified and decent lives

Thru Microfinance

- .. provides a tool for corporate social responsibility...
- ..eliminates financial dole-outs by promoting sustainability
- ..strengthens company image



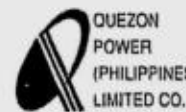
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Special PROJECT

Inquirer's new paper drive partners with Linis-Ganda

By Zane Ronquillo

FORGING partnerships with advocacy groups and institutions is nothing new for the Philippine Daily Inquirer, having worked with plenty of them in raising millions of pesos and increasing public awareness for various causes. The paper was among the first members of both the Children's Hour campaign, a fundraising venture for the benefit of abused and disadvantaged children all over the country; and Tabang Mindanaw, a relief and livelihood assistance effort for Mindanao citizens displaced by El Nifio and

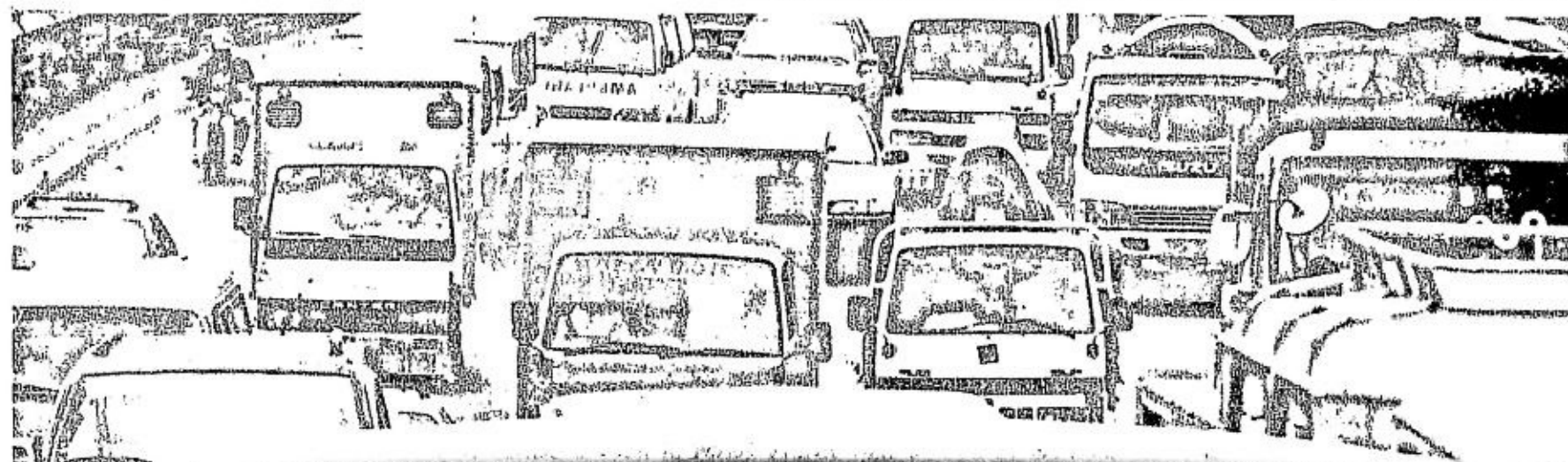
armed conflict. Habitat for Humanity Philippines, a house-building project for the homeless accomplished through volunteerism, is another group the paper works with on a yearly basis.

Early this year, another distinguished organization has been included in the list of its partners. The Metro Manila Federation of Environment, the implementor of the metro-wide Linis Ganda, has recently agreed to become the official Metro Manila collecting arm of Inquirer's New Paper Drive, which went na-



IN COMMEMORATION of World Environment Day, the INQUIRER forged a partnership with Metro Manila Federation of Environment (MMFE), the implementor of Linis-Ganda, in the promotion of Solid Waste Management and the collection of old newspapers and tabloids. INQUIRER's New Paper Drive, which will purchase old

newspapers at P5/kilo, was launched recently through a MOA signing. Closing the pact are INQUIRER president Sandy Prieto-Romualdez and MMFE chair Mayor Jose Teves Jr. Also present are Celine Madamba, INQUIRER corporate relations manager and Narda Camacho, executive VP for Linis-Ganda Inc.



TRAFFIC CONDITION: HAPPY ALL THE WAY.

tionwide last year and has recycled more than 160,000 kilos of old newspapers and tabloids.

The annual drive, now on its third year, aims to promote solid waste management through the purchase, collection and recycling of old newspapers and tabloids. This year, in addition to collection sites in Metro Manila, Cebu and Davao through FEP Printing Press, more than 2,500 eco-aides from Linis Ganda shall be mobilized in 17 cities and municipalities in Metro Manila.

At P5 per kilo, clean and dry newspapers and tabloids of any kind shall be purchased, collected and recycled into reusable newsprint or "new paper" to help offset the use of virgin wood pulp and minimize the use of landfills.

According to Inquirer president Sandy Prieto-Romualdez, "the use of landfills have caused both health and environmental hazards in the community. By promoting solid waste management, we hope to reduce the amount of waste going to dumpsites and make segregation and recycling a daily habit in homes, offices and communities."

Since 1903, the Philippines has lost over 67 percent of its forests, partly due to increased paper production. Local newspapers and tabloids consume more than 19,834 tons of newsprint every year, with only five percent actually recycled. Studies reveal that one ton of recycled paper can save up to 19 trees.

According to Linis-Ganda executive vice-president Narda Camacho, the effects of waste segregation are invaluable. "Kailangan lahat ng basura sa bahay i-segregate. Mabuti 'to para sa gobyerno dahil malaki ang mababawas sa gastos ng pag-hakot ng basura by 50 percent. Hindi lang yon, makakatipid ang mga negosyo dahil nababawasan ang importasyon ng raw materials mula sa ibang bansa." Not only does segregation and recycling benefit industries, but also the citizens. "Ang mga tao, hindi magkakasakit sapagkat malinis ang kapaligiran. Dahil sa programang ito, magkakapera pa ang mga bahay-bahay dahil sa binibili ang mga recyclables, at kumikita ang mga eco-aides ng maiuwi nila sa kani-lang pamilya."

The New Paper Drive was launched by the Inquirer as one of its many efforts to help protect the environment. Today, the Inquirer not only uses 100-percent recycled newsprint but soy-based ink as well, which emits non-toxic fumes when recycled.

According to Metro Manila Federation of Environment chair Mayor Jose Joson Teves Jr., "Ang Inquirer ang una at tanging dyaryo na nangangalaga sa kalikasan."

In 2002, the newspaper partnered with World Wildlife Philippines for the Environmental Fund for Legal Action, a still ongoing fundraising campaign for the proper prosecution of environmental crimes. This was the third year that both groups worked together, collaborating on the Wildlife Alive campaign in 2000 and Fish for Survival in 2001.

For those interested in selling their old newspapers and tabloids, walk-in sellers in Metro Manila can bring them to the FEP Printing Press loading dock between 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. on weekdays at 3817 Mascarido Street, behind the Inquirer building on Chino Roces Avenue, Makati, or have them picked up by Linis Ganda by calling 430-6274 and 428-0924. For walk-in sellers in Cebu and Davao, newspapers and tabloids will be accepted between 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. weekdays. Inquiries can be made at 897-8808 local 260 (Makati), (032) 340-7970/71 (Cebu) and (084) 244-1711/12 (Davao). The drive will last for three months until Tuesday, Sept. 9.

Pfizer Creates Partnerships for a Healthier Community through the Leaders for Health Project

Leaders for Health Project

Many problems plague the healthcare delivery system in the Philippines due to the fragmented way in which the different key players and the community think, feel and behave about health. Today, out of a population of close to 80 million people, 40% of Filipinos, especially those who live in far-flung areas have not seen a doctor in their lifetime.

A Holistic, Long-term Solution in Addressing Problems in Healthcare

Pfizer, in partnership with the Ateneo Graduate School of Business - Health Unit (AGSB) and the Department of Health (DOH), embarked on a long-term and holistic solution through the Leaders for Health Project (LHP). LHP aims to contribute towards the development of competent, professional and committed leaders who will provide strategic and effective leadership of the Philippine health sector at various levels. It seeks to change the mindset of people about health being not just the responsibility of a doctor but the broader community composed of other key stakeholders in health - the local government and the peoples' organizations.

For Pfizer, LHP was a way of applying and demonstrating its corporate values of Community and Leadership by providing concrete and sustainable solutions to the challenges faced by the Philippine healthcare sector.

Towards Building a Sustainable Health System

LHP builds on the initial successes of the Doctors To The Barrios Program (DTTB), where doctor volunteers are fielded to 6th or 8th class municipalities. During their stay, the doctor volunteers would earn a Masters degree in Health Care Management from the AGSB. A separate but parallel track composed of Capacity Enhancement Workshops for mayors and local community leaders have also been developed that will provide them with the basic knowledge and skills necessary for building and strengthening a sustainable health system.

Another component of the project is the renovation of the DOH Doctor to the Barrios - Pfizer Training and Learning Center at the DOH Compound. The upgraded center now houses a virtual library and training facilities to give the doctors a venue to receive training, conduct research and communicate faster with various DOH offices.

With the framework in place, LHP got underway in July 2002 when volunteer doctors were deployed to the pilot sites in Camarines Sur, Western Samar, Biliran and Surigao del Norte. A "Salubungan" or symbolic coming together took place between the DOH, AGSB and Pfizer officials and the local government officials, the rural doctors and the constituents in two offices - Surigao and Tacloban. The momentous event was attended by Health Secretary Dr. Manuel M. Dayrit, Jr., Pfizer President and Country Manager Ray Gerardo E. Baezro and AGSB Dean Dr. Alfredo R.A. Bengzon.

In its first 10 months, the LHP project has benefited 30 municipalities in four of the poorest provinces in the country. The volunteer doctors have been serving 60-80 people a day while receiving healthcare management skills and continuing medical education. The mayors, doctors and community leaders continue to participate in capacity enhancement workshops conducted regularly. These workshops enable them to identify specific health problems in their municipalities and map out strategic healthcare plans.

More recently, a Donors Forum was organized in an effort to increase the capacity of the LHP stakeholders to generate their own resources and contacts for their local health projects. It also served as a venue for the doctors to apply their knowledge in project design and implementation.

Indeed, LHP was a big step forward in the Philippines in pursuing Pfizer's worldwide effort to create partnerships for a healthier world.

LHP was recently honored by the Public Relations Society of the Philippines with an Anvil Award of Merit, an award given to outstanding public relations programs that are clearly identified with public interest and have a lasting impact and value.



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League of Corporate Foundations



Value of partnership in corporate citizenship

By Emi de Lara and Marlet Salazar

THE SPIRIT of benevolence has become familiar with several corporations globally through the years. The idea of "giving back to the community" is one common goal that unites these companies which, more often than not, are in the competing ends of their business interests.

Regardless of how inexorable the rivalry is, these companies, through their own corporate foundations, band together to empower the already ailing social services of their own countries—most especially in a developing nation like the Philippines.

Locally, these corporate

foundations have done enormous contributions where the government has left a huge gap to fill. Thus corporate citizenship grew by the numbers to the benefit of various marginalized sectors. But how far can an independent foundation go? No matter how noble the intention is, foundations can only do so much.

As Aniceto Sobrepeña of Metrobank Foundation said, "By investing in social development, the business sector helps in building a healthy and stable business climate which will eventually redound to a better

society where business will continue to prosper together with its stakeholders."

To augment the needs—financial or otherwise—the corporate foundations reach out to each other to be able to cover a larger scale. And partnership does not only create more resources, it also helps promote and strengthen corporate social responsibility.

According to Mario Deriquito of Ayala Foundation, "Partnership is based on the need to address big problems or issues versus scarce resources."

Ayala Foundation Inc. (AFI) has partnered with

other corporate or government-funded foundations which resulted in a more sustainable involvement. AFI serves as the social development arm of Ayala Corp. The foundation is determined to uplift the life of Filipinos, which indicates its participation in programs on education, youth development, information technology, environmental concerns, and Metrobank Foundation, on the other hand, is widely known for channeling its efforts in the advancement of the sadly weakening educational system in the

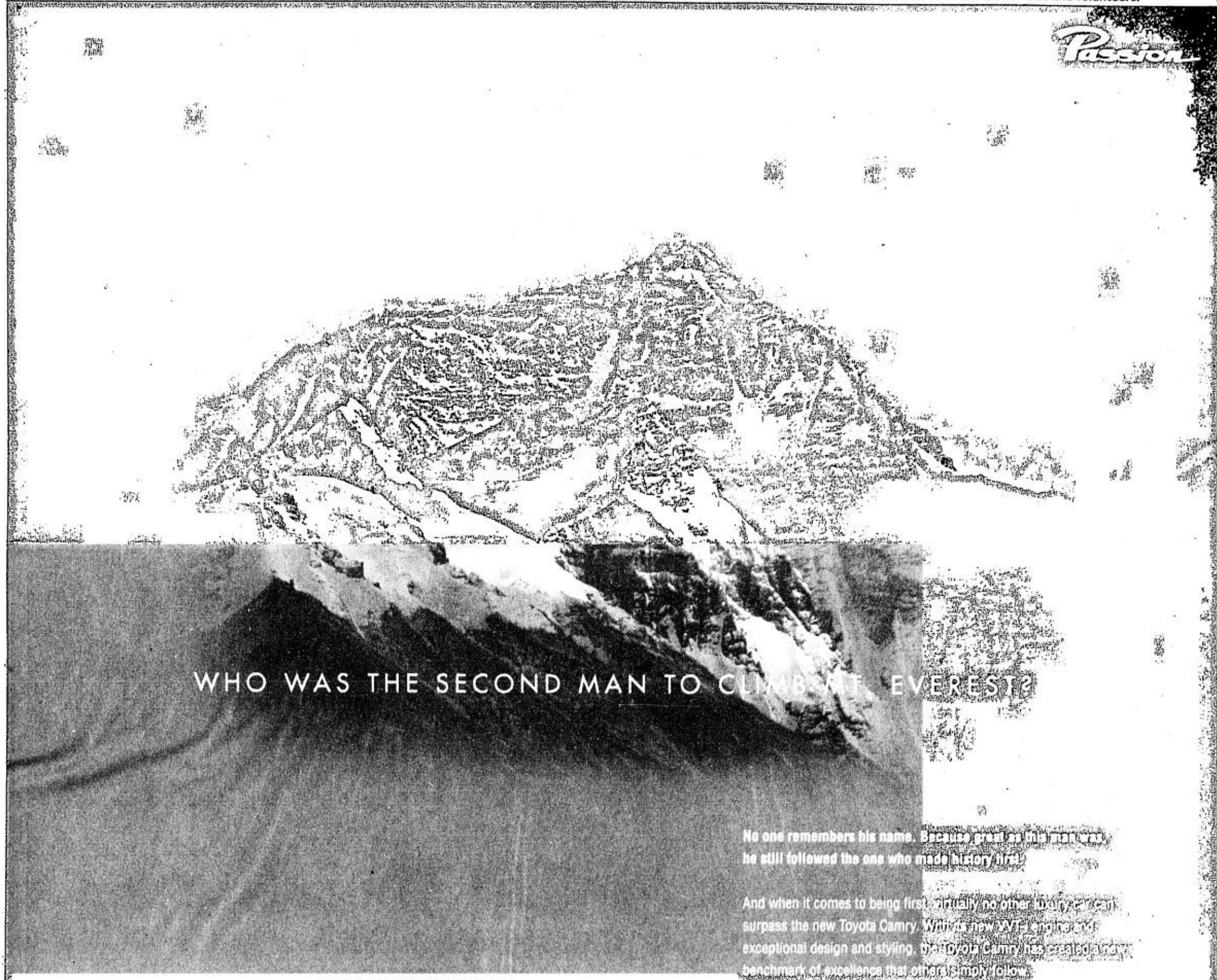
country. It has forged a partnership with the Federation of Filipino-Chinese Chambers of Commerce and Industry in creating a special scholarship program simply called SAGE (Share the Gift of Education). This effort is geared for the economically challenged academically qualified elementary and high school students enrolled in Chinese schools.

The Department of Social Welfare and Development found an ally in protecting children's rights with ABS-CBN Foundation's Bantay Bata 163.



PROJECTS like Habitat for Humanity provide companies and employees the opportunity to work in partnership with beneficiary families, skilled workers and volunteers.

PARTNERSHIP/F2

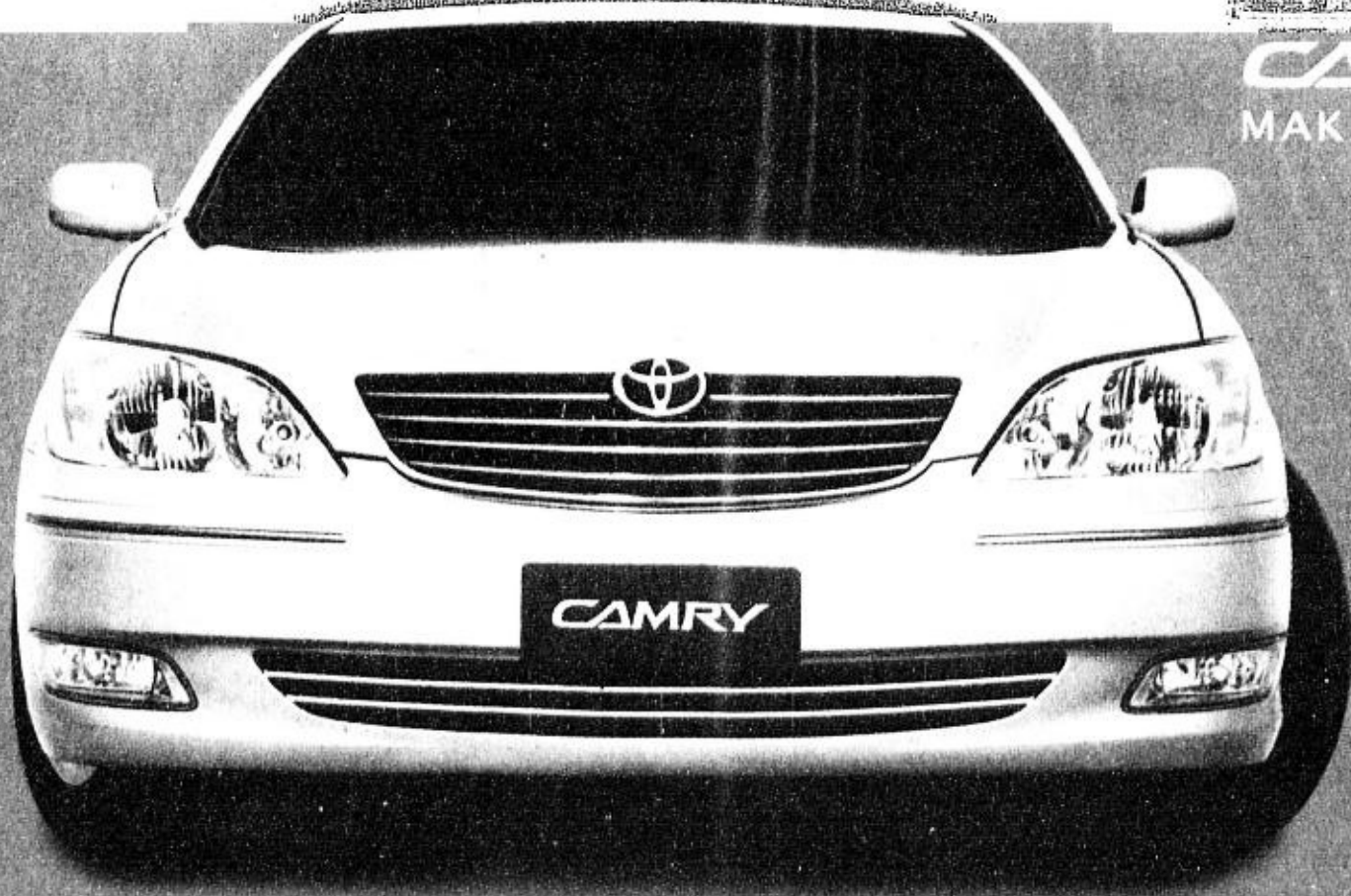


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Value of partnership in corporate citizenship

From page F1

It also contributed largely on salvaging (and has successfully done so) what is left of the environment with the Bantay Kalikasan program.

"Establishing partnerships becomes even more essential—so that our efforts are synergized, so that we can enhance our productivity in spite of streamlining efforts," said Gina Lopez of the ABS-CBN Foundation.

But the most publicized projects which saw the big companies in the Philippines joining forces are the Children's Hour campaign and the Habitat for Humanity project.

These two endeavors not only span global awareness, but also cover the two most significant components of social services—welfare of children and youth, and poverty housing.

"We are involved in Habitat for Humanity, said Fernando Zobel de Ayala of Ayala Corp. "Habitat offers a great opportunity to help us carry out our roles as good corporate citizens not only through fund mobilization but as volunteers as well. I personally believe that participating in a Habitat build is a beautiful experience. Working side-by-side with partner families and volunteers has given us, as individuals and as a company, a clearer perspective of our commitment to social progress."

The Children's Hour campaign in the Philippines is so far one of the most successful in the world. With a record of 400 corporations, 85,000 individuals and generating close to P40 million in less than six months, it is a monumental feat for both the benefactors and the beneficiaries.

Partnership even though it produces more positive results also has its challenges.

The diversity of ideas, objectives, and deadlines to meet could sometimes overshadow the value of the mission. Ayala's Derquito said, "These (things) have to be discussed from the very beginning so a common work plan and timetable can be prepared."

The expertise of one company may be needed by the other when a project in mind will soon be implemented.

One example is the initial nationwide project of Bridgeit dubbed text2teach led by AFI.

Through mobile phones (enter Nokia Philippines) public school teachers (comes DepEd) can request 80-full length videos (with the help of Pearson), and each introduces and illustrates a key component of the Philippine Science curriculum.

DepEd and Seameo-Innotech with the International Youth Foundation trained the teachers in using the technology. Globe Telecom, PMSI-Dream Broadcasting, and Chikka Asia are providing the technical support to meet the hardware, software, and communication requirements of the program.

Jaime Augusto Zobel de Ayala II of Ayala Corp. aptly said, "In this project, each global partner was carefully chosen to bring complementary assets and competencies to help enhance opportunities for young people. This results in a program where all partners are focused on single developmental goal that could not be achieved by any one single entity."

One common issue, although very few will admit, is the "billing problem." Many people might ask, "Why does this have to be an issue if the sole purpose is to help?"

Even big companies in the United States, where corporate citizenship has been thriving since time immemorial, participation in community-based projects can be a useful tool for public relations. Image-building is the keyword. But lest the people forget, these companies have the noblest of all intentions.

"We shouldn't be afraid or feel threatened by any group that exists to help a child, the family, or the environment. There is so much work to be done to make this world a better place to live in," Lopez added.

Partnership more than ever spells productivity. The commitment of the two or several parties involved means assured implementation of the undertaking. It goes beyond the word of honor, but the common goal is to help build a better community they themselves are inhabiting.

"Good partnerships recognize that the most effective way to leverage corporate citizenship is through common endeavor with others. They not only combine skills and provide access to resources that one partner may not have, but they also enhance the credibility of the results—results that might be less effective and believable if they come from any entity. Great things happen when people work together," Vicky Garchitorena, president of Ayala Foundation and chair of the League of Corporate Foundations, said.



TAKING part in the 'human chain' to bring concrete bricks to the build site in Taguig are Globe Telecom executives (from left) corporate and regulatory affairs SVP Rodolfo Salalima, human resource head Cesar Maureal and strategic staffing and employee relations head Ruel Maranan.

Globe Telecom builds homes with support of partners

ANSWERING the call of Habitat for Humanity Philippines Foundation in providing decent housing for the poor, Globe Telecom's top management and employees recently participated in their "Dream Build 2003" activity.

A total of 160 Globe and Islacom employees volunteered to build houses simultaneously in key areas

in Metro Manila, Cebu and Davao. Apart from offering volunteer work in building the houses, globe and Islacom employees also raised cash donations for the foundation to help finance its nationwide housing projects.

For this year, Globe sponsored and helped build a total of four houses. This is composed of two houses in

Taguig, one in Cebu and one in Davao.

This is the fifth year that Globe Telecom is participating in the worldwide house-build activity. During the previous years, Globe had helped build houses in Las Piñas; Tagaytay; Nasugbu, Batangas; Pinaglingonan and a previous site in Taguig.

'Good partnerships recognize that the most effective way to leverage corporate citizenship is through common endeavor with others. They not only combine skills and provide access to resources that one partner may not have, but they also enhance the credibility of the results—results that might be less effective and believable if they come from any entity. Great things happen when people work together.'

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

News that makes a difference

Coming Together to Enrich Lives.



The key to enriching lives is empowerment. The power to create and pursue a personal vision. The access to tools and opportunities to improve one's livelihood. The capability to rise above limitations of poverty, illiteracy, homelessness, malnutrition, and environmental degradation.

The commitment to improve the way of life of Filipinos is increasingly becoming an important component of business. In the Ayala Group, companies and employees are constantly working together to implement and sustain projects in corporate social responsibility. The objective is to foster trust and development in the communities that sustain its businesses. The result is a formidable merging of resources to create real and lasting impact on individuals, the community, and society at large.

Ayala also expands its outreach efforts through strategic partnerships with government, local and international organizations, and civil society. This enables the different sectors to address issues on a much larger scale.

More can be achieved by working together. By building and strengthening its relationship with partners, donors, beneficiaries, and other stakeholders, Ayala will continue to take up the challenge to help enrich lives.

Ayala Foundation USA • Ayala Museum • Ayala Young Leaders Congress • Ayala-Intel Computer Clubhouse • Bank of the Philippine Islands Science Awards • BPI Micro-Financing Program • Barangay.net • Bridge/It Program: Text2Teach • Buklod Bahayan Daycare • Calatagan Retirees Program • Center of Excellence in Public Elementary Education • Children's Hour • connectEd.ph • Filipinas Heritage Library • Globe Telecom Academic Achievement Awards • Good Neighbor Program • Habitat for Humanity • Integrated Learning Kiosk (i-Link) • Iraya Mangyan Assistance Program • KALAH! ng Ayala • Lingkod Pinoy.org • Mindanao Silk Weaving Project • Project YouthTech • Solid Waste Management • Tabang Mindanaw • Tubig Para sa Barangay • UP Ayala Technopark

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ABS-CBN Bayan Foundation's partnerships for the child

AS AN offshoot of ABS-CBN Foundation Inc. (AFI), ABS-CBN Bayan Foundation Inc. employs microfinance as a tool for poverty alleviation. It was established in 1997, as another foundation from AFI, with the aim of giving opportunities for self-employment among the underprivileged to improve their families' living conditions.

Its number of clients continue to grow so that by end of 2002, a total of P1.2 billion of cumulative loans were disbursed by the Foundation. Bayan's outstanding loans has totaled P88.2 million while its members' savings has reached P36.2 million. It has achieved a high repayment rate of 96.8 percent, an indication that its members, as partners, practice responsible entrepreneurship. As of December 2002, ABS-CBN Bayan Foundation had a total of 17,580 clients, covering 83 municipalities/cities and 812 barangays. For the past year alone, the amount of loans released was P329.6 million.

What is unique about ABS-CBN Bayan is that it is the only Microfinance Institution

(MFI) that focuses on the child as the center of its endeavors. It envisions a strong and dynamic organization cultivating for the children, self-sufficient, secured and compassionate families.

ABS-CBN Bayan has partnered with various like-minded corporations and organizations to reach a greater number of disadvantaged microentrepreneurs. ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp., Bauang Private Power Corp., First Gas Power Corp., Panay Private Power Corp., Quezon Power (Philippines, Ltd.) and just recently, Colgate-Palmolive Philippines, Inc. have supported ABS-CBN Bayan in expanding its areas of operation to reach 50,000 microentrepreneurs by 2005.

ABS-CBN Bayan offers need-based products and services which include Group and Individual Loan, Savings, Damayan Fund, and capacity building activities for its clients like training on values formation, leadership and business management that aim to enhance and improve their skills.

'That is where I feel corporate social responsibility should go. it is by helping from an elevated state of consciousness that we will be able to transcend all petty limitations and really interconnect with others. This inner-connectedness, I am convinced, is the treasure chest of our future.'

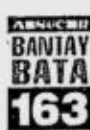
ABS-CBN BAYAN FOUNDATION PRESIDENT, GINA LOPEZ, ON CSR AND PARTNERSHIP.

KA PARTNER NG KABATAAN



ABS-CBN FOUNDATION, INC.

For the environment,
for it is home to God's living creatures
For the family,
for from their prayers springs peace
For the child,
for they are the fair hope of tomorrow



BANTAY BATA 163
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Special PROJECT

Stepping up efforts to improve lives of the urban poor

FOR MANY years, the Philippine Business for Social Progress (PBSP) has made a huge difference in many less fortunate families' lives. The corporate-led foundation embarked on yet another endeavor in its bid to help alleviate poverty in the country through the Strategic Private Sector Partnerships for Urban Poverty Reduction (STEP-UP) in Metro Manila.

Late last year, PBSP, Asian Development Bank (ADB), Housing Urban Development Council (HUDCC), and Department of Finance (DoF) signed a memorandum of agreement that will benefit 5,823 urban poor families in 23 communities from 9 cities in Metro Manila. Among the lucky localities are

Malabon, Caloocan, Mandaluyong, Manila, Marikina, Quezon City, Pasig, Taguig, and Muntinlupa.

The Japan Fund for Poverty Reduction (JFPR), through the ADB, contributed \$3.6 million while PBSP added \$3.33 million in financial and in-kind as counterpart assistance for the implementation of STEP-UP.

A Pact Made to Uplift Urban Living Conditions

The grant will help improve the living conditions of poor families who are enrolled in the Community Mortgage Program of the government. This program, as a whole, aims to assist a part of the 35 percent of urban population who live in slum dwellings. These families live in

substandard conditions: inadequate access to potable water, overcrowded makeshift homes, and poor sanitation.

The STEP-UP program is the 173-member companies' response to the widespread problem of urban poverty and the government's call for support. PBSP is the largest non-stock, non-profit corporate-led social development foundation that has been operating for more than 31 years since it was established in December 1970.

The \$6.9-million fund will finance the development of community structures such as housing. Revolving funds are aimed at providing loans to qualified micro-entrepreneurs for livelihood assistance. One-time grant assistance is also

lined up to the communities for the construction of water facilities, drainage, roads, re-blocking, and other infrastructure needed in a community.

Private Sector Spearheads NCR Growth

The program will also encourage more businesses to provide financial assistance, employee volunteers and skills sharing to adopted communities. Partnerships with local government units, non-government organizations, homeowners' associations, as well as business establishments and the academe will oversee the coordination and implementation of housing and interrelated community programs.

To sustain the program's objective,

homeowners will be involved in capacity building activities to ensure the growth and improvement of the community.

"The key objective is for us to fuse together resources, commitments, care and dedication of the private sector," says Juan B. Santos, trustee and chairman of PBSP Center for Corporate Citizenship.

The benefits don't end there. STEP-UP program includes the risk reduction and management component for urban poor communities. It is not enough that they have a proper shelter, but families need also to protect their homes and community from floods, fire and typhoons. This program will help develop people's capabilities in preventing and responding to disasters, and to provide basic equipment.

STEP-UP was created when ADB initiated pilot-testing new approaches for on-site urban upgrading and off-site relocation of informal settlers under the JFPR. PBSP is known to have generously contributed and is prominently involved in various projects for urban upgrading and poverty alleviation. Because of this, PBSP is a perfect partner to promote corporate involvement with a more focused impact on the lives of the urban poor.

"The objective is to increase the level and impact of corporate outreach, and to ensure sustainable long-term impact that improve the lives of the poor in a significant way," says Matthew Westfall, ADB principal urban development specialist.

One year was all it took to make STEP-UP a reality.

STEP-UP not only benefits urban poor population, it is also a way to unite the private sector, local government units, and the national government to work as one in easing the conditions of poverty-stricken communities.

"The objective is to increase the level and impact of corporate outreach, and to ensure sustainable long-term impact that improve the lives of the poor in a significant way."

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